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Summer 1998

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# *Adventist Heritage*

A Journal of Adventist History ▲ 18.1 ▲ Summer 1998







# Contributors

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**Arnold C. Reye** is a teacher and educational administrator. He served for twelve years on the Avondale College Board of Governors, and recently retired as director of education for the Trans-Tasman Union Conference, South Pacific Division of Seventh-day Adventists. In retirement, he has continued his exploration of administrative theory, history, and philosophy. He holds degrees from two universities in Australia and from Andrews University. Dr. Reye currently edits *The Adventist Professional*, a journal published by The Adventist Business and Professional Members, Australia.

**Raymond F. Cottrell** studied at what is now La Sierra University, where he served as the first editor of the *College Criterion*. Subsequently earning bachelor's and master's degrees at Pacific Union College, he went on to serve as an editor of the *Review and Herald*. Still actively engaged in research and writing, he recently retired as the founding editor of *Adventist Today*.

**Delmer G. Ross** is Professor of History and Political Science at La Sierra University. He earned a BA in history and Spanish at Pacific Union College in 1963 and a PhD in Latin American history from the University of California at Santa Barbara in 1971. After two years as a faculty member at Oakwood College, he joined the La Sierra faculty in 1977. He is the author of four published books, including *Rails in Paradise*.

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**Frederick G. Hoyt** completed a BA in history and religion, and nearly fulfilled the requirements for a degree in physics, at La Sierra after his studies were interrupted by a stint in the United States Navy during World War II. He returned to his *alma mater* to teach in 1956, completing a PhD in American history at Claremont Graduate School in 1961. A Fulbright Scholarship took him to the Philippines in 1955-6. He has continued his scholarly study of the Philippines and US-Philippine relations, and has also conducted extensive research into the mid-nineteenth-century New England context of the Millerite movement.

**Rennie B. Schoepflin** is Associate Professor of History at La Sierra University. He studied religion and biology at Walla Walla College and attended the Loma Linda University School of Medicine before earning an MA in church history at what is now La Sierra University. He received a PhD in the history of science and medicine from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His dissertation has been accepted for publication by Johns Hopkins University Press.

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# The Editor's Stump

**T**he Adventist past continues to inform the present and inspire the future. This issue of *Adventist Heritage* well illustrates that twofold reality.

As I write, it is summer in Southern California, but the weather here is not as torrid as it is where La Sierra University president Lawrence T. Geraty is toiling as part of the Madaba Plains Project, a world-class archaeological expedition in Jordan. Geraty has been associated with this project from its beginning, and currently serves as its executive director. Biblical archaeology has evoked particular interest amongst Seventh-day Adventists ever since Siegfried Horn demonstrated its possibilities for our community of faith. With their deep interest in Scripture, Adventists everywhere will be glad for Roberta J. Moore's timely narration of their church's commitment to unearthing biblical history.

George Knight continues to narrate Adventism's past and offer insightful interpretive comments. The last issue of *Adventist Heritage* (17.2) reviewed two slim volumes by Knight, one giving an overview of Sabbatarian Adventism, the other offering "a fresh look" at Ellen White's life, writings, and major themes. Two similar volumes are now available from Knight's pen. One of these (*Reading Ellen White*, 1997) offers much-needed suggestions on how to understand and apply her writings; the other (*Ellen White's World*, 1998) describes the context in which Ellen White lived and ministered.

My students constantly remind me, after they read Knight's histories, of the role Avondale College has played within Adventism due to Ellen White's determined effort to ensure that it epitomized "true education." It is timely, therefore, to note Arnold Reye's account of the American couple who so ably led "The Avondale School for Christian Workers" during its founding years. The letters of Ella and Cassius Hughes abound in fascinating insights. My only regret is that it has taken a century for Adventists to be given access to these intimate per-

spectives from Avondale's first principal and his wife.

There is a sense in which this issue of *Adventist Heritage* celebrates important milestones in the Second Advent Movement. Avondale College is 100 years old, La Sierra University is 75, and the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* is 40. Who better than Raymond Cottrell to remind us of our debt to Francis D. Nichol and those who envisioned, wrote, and published the first seven volumes of the Commentary between 1954 and 1957! We are indebted to Roy Branson, editor of *Spectrum: The Journal of the Association of Adventist Forums*, for permission to reprint Cottrell's piece, with slight editing, from *Spectrum* 16.3 (1984).

The wit and wisdom of Fred Hoyt offers lively reflections on why La Sierra continues to attract a vibrant student body after three quarters of a century. Hoyt has long been one of those whose standard of teaching and writing beckoned students to excellence. His expertise in naval history and in the primary sources of early Adventism is well known. Dr. Hoyt's overview of La Sierra's history is enriched by his mastery of historical method and by the fact that he participated in so much of what his article describes.

*Adventist Heritage* owes much to Paul Landa, historian par excellence who now rests in hope of the first resurrection. Rennie Schoepflin, one of Dr. Landa's students who became his colleague in the profession of history, reflects feelingly on his mentor's scintillating life. Other reviewers comment on the significance of Latin American Adventism, the development of Adventism in the northwestern United States, and on a significant video portrayal of Millerism.

With such a menu on offer, it is clear that delays in the appearance of *Adventist Heritage* are not due to lack of issues to discuss or authors to write. Happy reading!

—ARTHUR PATRICK

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**A**rthur Patrick has been too modest here to note his own active involvement in soliciting and editing the articles that make up this issue of *Adventist Heritage*. After an amazingly short two years as visiting associate professor of church history and Christian ministry at La Sierra University he has returned to his native Australia, there to begin what is likely to be an exceptionally active retirement. Arthur's departure deprives *Adventist Heritage* readers of the benefits his seasoned judgment and wide-ranging knowledge of Adventist history

made available. Those of us who have had the privilege of working with him will miss his warmth and his droll wit as well. We are sure you will wish to join the La Sierra University administration and the *Adventist Heritage* staff in celebrating Dr. Patrick's commitment to the scholarly and theologically serious study of Adventist history and in thanking him for his devoted work on behalf of *Adventist Heritage*.

—GARY CHARTIER



# Long Ago and Far Away

## An Introduction to Seventh-day Adventist Archaeology in Bible Lands

**Roberta J. Moore**

Occasionally you stumble on a remarkable book that makes you want more. Such a volume is *The Spade Confirms the Book*, by Siegfried Horn, whose name draws admiration and tributes from groups well beyond his own professional and religious circles.

Horn's special interest—archaeology—by the 1940s and '50s had leaped to prominence in many colleges and universities. My small New England college offered one course in archaeology and the more I read the more I wanted to read.

In 1951 Horn earned a doctorate in Egyptology from the University of Chicago; by then he was professor of archaeology and history of antiquity at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, later at Andrews University. He had taken part in several archaeological expeditions but wanted to plan and direct one of his own.

Those engaged in these expeditions were of all ages and backgrounds. A 19-year-old begged that he and his younger brother be allowed to accompany Siegfried Horn on one of his trips to the Holy Land. That 19-year-old? Lawrence T. Geraty, now president of La Sierra University. But more about him presently.

Dr. Horn finally achieved his goal for an archaeological expedition of his own. Under the sponsorship of Andrews University, and with financial support from the Archaeological Research Fund, he made the first of several trips from the United States to Jordan trying to decide on a site for his first "dig."

Eventually he chose Heshbon. The name itself attracted him; it was similar to one that had played a key role in Old Testament

history: Heshbon. The same place, perhaps?

A team of renowned and experienced archaeologists responded to Horn's invitation, as well as college teachers and students who agreed to pay their own traveling and maintenance costs.

Horn and his team finished necessary paper work, secured storage facilities for the hundreds of tools they would need, and set up a tent camp for the crew.

They planned to begin excavation on Monday, June 5, 1967.

Though there had been signs of trouble for several weeks, the irony of the situation became clear in the few days before June 5. On that day the Israeli-Arab Six Day War began. Plans had to be postponed.

In a book published in Horn's honor 25 years later, above a picture of him, this tribute appeared:

Those of us who have contributed to this volume owe him much. Because of his vision, determination, scholarship, and spirit of youth, we dedicate this book to him in honor of the 85th anniversary of his birth year.

Sadly, Dr. Horn died at 86, while the book in his honor was still unfinished.

Siegfried Horn himself produced a total of 700 articles and books. His writings make it clear that in his mind "The Spade Confirms the Book."

But let's go back to that volume intended to honor Horn's 85th birthday. It had 18 contributors and two editors, one of whom was the young man who at 19 had traveled with Horn



*On a recent visit, Dr. Lawrence Geraty poses with the local guard at Biblical Heshbon in Jordan.*





*Dr. Geraty (on right) welcomes Hufzi Haddad, longtime Jordanian friend and former government representative to the Madaba Plains Project.*

to the Holy Land—Lawrence Geraty.

Having earned two degrees and briefly pastored a church in southeastern California, Geraty had gone to Andrews University for a Master's and a Bachelor of Divinity. He intended to be a foreign missionary like his father. Bags packed, he was waiting in California for his visa when he got a call from Dr. Horn, offering him a teaching position at Andrews.

When Siegfried Horn began looking ahead to retirement, from all his former students and associates he chose Lawrence Geraty to succeed him at Andrews and in Jordan.

Now, instead of becoming a foreign missionary, Geraty became a teacher, an archaeologist and a college president.

In 1972 he received a Ph.D. in Old Testament and Syro-Palestinian archaeology (with distinction) from Harvard University. After several years of teaching at Andrews, in 1986 he went to Atlantic Union College as president and then came to La Sierra University as president in 1993.

His writings in archaeology include chapters in several scholarly volumes, articles in journals and Seventh-day Adventist periodicals, besides his contributing to and editing two books intended to honor Siegfried Horn, *Hesban After 25 Years*, with David Merling, and with Larry Herr, the volume *The Archaeology of Jordan and Other Studies*.

We began with Siegfried Horn and his pioneering work on archaeology among Seventh-day Adventists. From here on we shall be dealing with Lawrence Geraty and his influence on scores who through him became interested in archaeology.

And we shall also go back to Hesban, where Horn in 1968—after the Six Day War—had conducted his first “dig.”

A reasonable question would be, “Why Hesban?” The answer is that biblical scholars had wondered for years if this could be the Amorite city called Heshbon, where according to the biblical Book of Numbers the Israelites on their exodus from Egypt towards the Promised Land had conquered King Sihon and his army. The similarity of names had given rise to the question, and an answer would support a date for the Exodus—sometime in the 15th century.

Most books refer to the place as Tell Hesban. The term “dig” is self explanatory. But what about “tell”?

In many areas of Jordan and Palestine, level for an expanse of miles, a hill or large mound breaks the flatness. The Arabic word for this is “tell.” Commonly the hill or mound contains what is left of early human dwelling places; thus a “tell” would be of great interest and value to archaeologists.

The approach to such an area involves first a walk-over, more often several walk-overs or ground searches. Then comes a surveying crew, equipped with a variety of instruments, its task to plan and lay out the area to be excavated.

One of the worst effects of the 1967 Six Day War, incidentally, was that all the surveying instruments had disappeared, including those owned by the United States government.

While waiting for replacement of their surveying tools, the crew laid out the site with only a compass, tapes and string, an unbeliev-

able accomplishment, considering that they had to divide the area into an intricate pattern of trenches and squares.

Digging is a meticulous process, with soil specialists, supervisors and site directors close at hand; they record every finding, no



*A reconstructed Iron Age (1200-500 B.C.) ceramic jug found in many pieces on the dig.*

matter how small, note every change in soil color and texture and save fragments such as pottery, coins, bones and roots.

Ordinarily they use picks and trowels of different sizes and shapes; sometimes, using small brushes, they dust the squares' or trenches' sides, which they call "balks."

Then they carefully sift the soil through wire on a small table where they can spot and save every fragment. At the end of a working period, the director tallies findings in a permanent report.

Dust. Sweat. Scorching sun. Dirt. Rising before sunrise. Tedious digging. Painstaking work.

Sound inviting?

Well, it does to Adventist archaeologists . . .

This was the beginning of an article by Lawrence Geraty in *Adventist Review*, Feb. 10, 1994.

Even Mrs. Geraty—Gillian, to those at La Sierra University who know her—dug in the trenches when she accompanied her husband to Hesban.

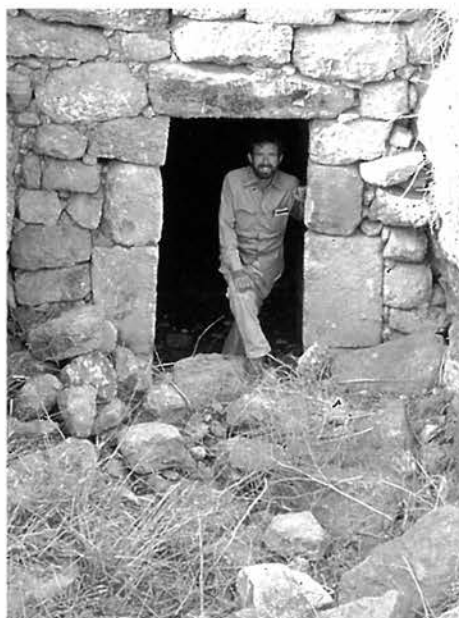
"That is," she says, "until I had to start wearing glasses. Then the dust kept me from seeing and put an end to my digging."

Lest his readers get the wrong impression from that first paragraph in his *Review* article, Dr. Geraty went on to say,

... let me make it clear that archaeologists don't enjoy eating dust or sweating under the burning desert sun.

However, they do enjoy the exhilarating feeling that comes from discovering ancient artifacts that bring biblical times to life. A significant discovery makes all the efforts seem worthwhile. And a second or third discovery adds mounds of joy to one's soul.

The Hesban excavations yielded a goodly number of coins and thousands of potsherds, some going back to about 1200 BC and extending to 1456 AD. Pottery, especially if it is unbroken, along with highly valued coins, "add mounds of joy to one's soul." But an added attraction at Hesban was the finding of a collection of carved and chiseled bones, apparently



*Dr. Geraty appears in the doorway of an abandoned medieval home discovered by his regional survey team in Jordan.*

intended for artistic purposes.

Then, too, through studies by anthropologists and other specialists, the team could piece together a fairly clear picture of how people lived. A new laboratory process called "froth flotation" enabled plant scientists to study what seeds were germinated and grown.

Dr. Geraty played a key role in the five seasons of Hesban excavation, the only member of the archaeological team with such a record. He became director of the project in 1973 and remained in that capacity until the Hesban site gave way to the Madaba Plains Project, an integrated multidisciplinary venture with which, incidentally, he is still associated.

Like his mentor and friend, Siegfried Horn, Dr. Geraty soon developed a reputation for writing regularly about the team's goals and findings. Professional organizations frequently commented on the factor of promptness from Tell Hesban.

Dr. Geraty reasoned that Seventh-day Adventist organizations and individuals contributed generously to the project and deserved to be kept informed. He became noted for his factual style of writing, which

obviously underscores his primary goal—to share with his audience, including laymen and ministers rather than only fellow scientists, the information uncovered in the dig.

And the result is predictable. His byline and pictures from a "dig" draw readers. A few years ago, a couple from Portland, Oregon, looking for a way to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary that would give them something to remember for the rest of their lives, read about the dig at Hesban and decided to make a summer trip to Jordan. Jim and Viv Robertson—he is a religion teacher and she is a school nurse—signed on with Dr. Geraty's team.

"It was great," they say now. "The dormitories (at a Palestinian boarding school) were full, so we slept on the roof. The

food was delicious. And we dug and cleaned and sorted with the experts." Before they came home, they had pictures taken on a camel,



*A grid is imposed on the cleared surface of Tell Jalul where excavation began in 1994 as part of the Madaba Plains Project.*

with authentic Arab gear. No question: that was an anniversary to remember.

Dr. Geraty describes living arrangements. "Since that first year, when we put up the tent camp," he says, "we've arranged to use dormitories." And the cooking? "We take our cook with us," he says. "Laila Mashny, from the Washington area. She in turn takes with her two trusted helpers, her brother Wadie Mashny, and Ruth Stonehouse."

The crew of archaeologists and other scientists number 40 to 50, plus at least that many more volunteers, but at the first sign of activity at least 150 local workers make an appearance, grateful for the opportunity of earning money.

And what have been the results of five seasons of excavation in Hesban plus as many more with the Madaba Plains Project? Each of the writers in *Hesban After 25 Years* describe their discoveries: thousands of bones of domestic animals, caves and cisterns for storage, churches, tombs, art objects of various types, coins and pottery.

With each discovery, artists and photographers have been on hand to make illustrations of the objects, later to be included in published reports of the expeditions. Some of this type of work has been left to be done after the crew returned to home base.

Obviously in limited space, we can provide few details, but fortunately the development of computer technology has added untold opportunities for colleges and museums to access both information and illustrations.

Of special interest to those in the Hesban expeditions have been the churches in the area. Several writers have described various features they have in common. After the last Andrews University season at Hesban a Baptist group took over the excavation of what they identified as the Hesban North Church.

They found strong evidence that major parts of the church—as with other churches in the area—were preserved from earlier construction and reused. For example, the North Church was only one with mosaic tiles from an earlier period, and columns and parts of walls.

archaeologists concluded that the churches dated probably from the sixth to the eighth centuries AD, what is generally called the Byzantine Christian period.

Along with structural relics, the buildings contained many carved bones and inscriptions, some of which suggested that they were memorials to families of influence and wealth.

From the analysis of bones found in many areas, anthropologists pieced together pictures of early life in the Hesban area. Bones from camels were abundant, as were cattle and goats. One writer commented that today's settlers have all the do-

mestic animals known to their ancestors except pigs.

Life in those days, including the use of caves and cisterns for storage and the types of dwellings, was little different from life now. In many cases the digging went down to bedrock, suggesting that the civilization being unearthed was the very beginning of life in Hesban.

Discovered in great quantities and painstakingly preserved were many types of pottery. Since pottery was the most common of early writing materials to be preserved, and in various languages, a find of ostraca pottery, (with writing) occasioned great excitement among the crew, some of whom were expert at reading the various scripts. And again, thanks to artists and photographers with the expedition, books today are well illustrated with pottery telling of early events.

Much of the pottery was broken into small pieces, called

"sherds." These were found almost anywhere in the trenches and also in the cisterns built for storing water for domestic animals, crops, and household use.

With each cluster of homes, and in some areas, with every dwelling, were cisterns—small, covered areas either inside or close to a house, and larger ones at a little distance, all built to store water. Since rain fell at best from November through March, water was often scarce and needed to be stored.

One of the most common building materials for houses and storage sheds was brick, dried in the sun, and often mixed with straw which gave the bricks a longer life. But there were also structures made of stone and occa-

sionally of wood. It was the job of the walk-over crew and the surveyors to spot areas where families were living, but as the work continued it was obvious that the style of living had changed little over the centuries.

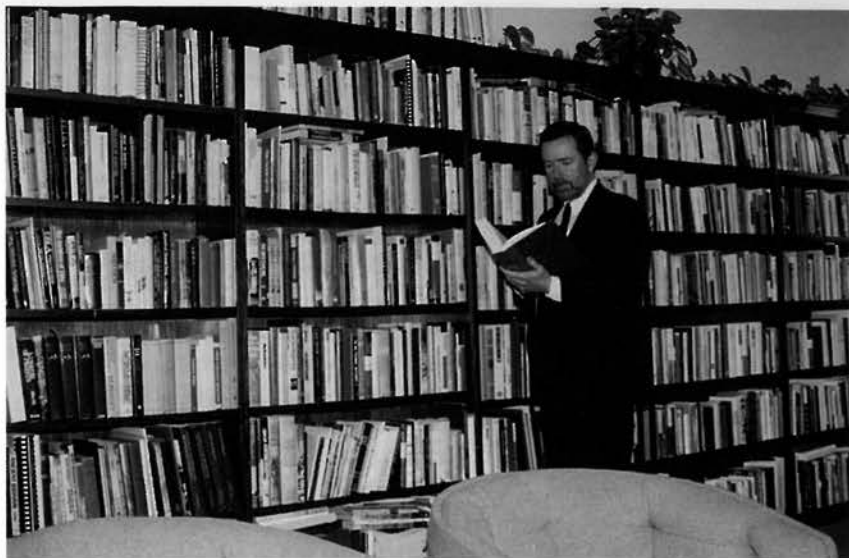
Certainly, even from this brief summary, it should be clear that the work in the Hesban area was fruitful. As it continued, few in Jordan or back in the homeland saw it as wasted money and effort: quite the contrary, in fact.

But it was not without its disappointments. When the final report of the Hesban expeditions is completed—14 volumes in



*Dr. Geraty arranges some artifacts in preparation for their being photographed by the dig photographer.*





Dr. Geraty squeezes more than 2,000 books into his archaeological library at his office in the administration building at La Sierra University.

all—there will be little said on the early history of the Israelites. The archaeological teams admit that they found less than Dr. Horn hoped for in the Hesban area—that is, they found nothing clearly tying Hesban to the exodus of Israelites from Egypt.

But not far away is the Madaba Plains, where Dr. Geraty and his team are now occupied. Who knows what they will find there? Pottery, most certainly, coins, bones—and perhaps support for very early biblical history, such as the exodus.

### Suggested Reading

- Geraty, Lawrence T., and Larry Herr. eds., *The Archaeology of Jordan and Other Studies*, Andrews University, 1986.
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- Horn, Siegfried H., *The Spade Confirms the Book*, Review and Herald, 1980.
- Joukowsky, Martha. *A Complete Manual of Field Archaeology*, Prentice Hall, 1980.
- King, Phillip J., *American Archaeology in the Mideast, A History of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, American Schools of Oriental Research, 1983.
- Willis, Lloyd A., *Archaeology in Adventist Literature, 1937-1980*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation, 1982.



Dr. Geraty enjoys relaxing between office appointments with one of his archaeological volumes.

# “Home Thoughts from Abroad”

## The Avondale Letters of Cassius and Ella Hughes, 1897-98

### Arnold C. Reye

The first Seventh-day Adventist missionaries to the South Pacific called at Auckland, New Zealand, 1 June 1885, and arrived in Sydney five days later. The group proceeded south to Melbourne, where a home base was established. The work of these pioneers was so successful in both Australia and New Zealand, they were joined by A. G. Daniells in 1886 and Ellen G. White and William C. White in 1891. Recognizing the need to train colonial workers, the Australasian Bible School was opened in St. Kilda, a suburb of Melbourne, in August 1892. This school operated for only two years as the congested city location proved entirely unsuitable for meeting the school's stated purposes. The leaders therefore searched for a rural location.

During 1893 and early 1894 the search for a suitable site was conducted along the railway corridor between Melbourne and Sydney. Several promising properties came to light but proved either too small, too expensive, or too inaccessible. Finally, after much soul-searching, the Brettville estate of 1,450 acres at Coorabong was purchased for \$4,500. This property, about 100 miles north of Sydney, provided a rural setting within reasonable access to Sydney and within close proximity to Newcastle. The Sydney-Newcastle railway line passed nearby with a station at Morissett.

Bounded by two streams, Dora Creek and Sandy Creek, it was decided to call the estate “Avondale” and the school “Avondale College.” The institution began in 1895 without buildings or other educational facilities. It did, however, have what was called “the industrial department.” This was a euphemistic way to describe the program for clearing the land, planting orchards and constructing buildings. The curriculum consisted of manual work during the morning and early afternoon with classes from 4:00-8:00 pm.

Early 1896 W. W. Prescott, the denomination's foremost educator, visited Australia. While the combination of work and study met with Ellen White's approval, Prescott and several other educators at Avondale agreed that the program did not justify

the name college. The name was therefore changed to The Avondale School for Christian Workers and Prescott gave considerable time to develop plans for a sound academic program to achieve better balance in the work-study program. In this he

collaborated extensively with Ellen White. The main thrust in 1896, however, was not academic but the improvement of the property and the construction of buildings in which to begin the school proper in 1897.

L. J. Rousseau, principal of the Australasian Bible School, had transferred to Avondale, but due to his wife's ill health returned to Battle Creek mid-1896. Rousseau had sought leave for only one year, but by early 1897 it was evident that he would not return. This left the Avondale school without an experienced educator to implement the program developed by Ellen White and Prescott. The choice for the foundation principal of the Avondale School for Christian Workers therefore fell on Cassius B. Hughes.



*Cassius B. Hughes, first principal of the Avondale School for Christian Workers*

Cassius Boone Hughes hailed from Missouri and studied at Battle Creek College. After a brief period as a pastor in Kansas, he was appointed dean of men and Bible teacher at Walla Walla College. Dean of women at Walla Walla was Ella Evans, also a former Battle Creek College student. They were married in 1893. Prior to her appointment to Walla Walla, Ella Evans had taught for four years at South Lancaster Academy (later Atlantic Union College). In 1894 Cassius and Ella relocated to Keene, Texas, where Cassius became the founding principal of Keene Academy (later Southwestern Adventist University).



Why Cassius Hughes for Avondale? The answer is perhaps found in a presentation Hughes made to the delegates at the General Conference session in February 1897. Reported in the General Conference Daily Bulletin under the title "Educational Reform," Hughes made the following points: (1) educational reform and religious revival were linked together; (2) the work-study regime was foundational to educational reform; (3) learning practical life skills was more important than theoretical or book knowledge; and (4) the school curriculum should include a work component as an important part of character development.

In his presentation Hughes expressed dismay that Adventist educators had not taken seriously Ellen White's counsel given over twenty years earlier. He declared: "We are years behind the providence of God." Furthermore, he regretted that Adventist educators were only then coming to appreciate the value of practical education but for the wrong reason—because it was becoming fashionable in the secular schools. In the same vein, he lamented the fact that Adventist schools had missed the opportunity to provide the educational model other agricultural and industrial schools might follow.

Cassius Hughes also implied a strong commitment to the educational philosophy Ellen White had been expounding for two decades, and for which the Avondale school was to be the model. It is not surprising therefore that both Ellen White and other church leaders saw Hughes as the best candidate to take up the challenge of the new school in Australia. Things must have moved quickly for within months Cassius and Ella Hughes were headed for parts Antipodean to implement this radical educational program. This article is about their first few years at Avondale.

### The Hughes Letters

In 1978 Milton R. Hook presented his doctoral dissertation on "The Avondale School and Adventist Educational Goals, 1894-1900." In the course of his research Hook acquired a set of thirty-five letters written by Cassius and Ella Hughes from Avondale to parents and family back in the States. Hook made some use of the letters and, as agreed with the donor, deposit-

ed them with the Ellen G. White/SDA Research Center at Avondale College upon his return to Australia.

The letters, four by Cassius and thirty-one by Ella, were written during the first two years of the Hugheses' sojourn in Australia. They provide interesting glimpses of life at Avondale during the school's early and formative years as seen through the eyes of two American expatriates. These letters I share with you.

### The Journey to Australia

The first letter was written soon after Cassius and Ella Hughes arrived in Australia and covered events from a port of call at Apia, Western

Samoa, to their arrival at Avondale. An earlier letter was posted in Samoa but has not survived with the set. Neither Cassius nor Ella Hughes make mention of the name of the boat on which they traveled. There is good reason, however, to believe it was the RMS Monowai of 3,493 tons under Captain M. Carey. According to shipping records, the Monowai departed San Francisco on 29 April, 1897, and made calls at Honolulu, 6 May, Samoa, 13 May, and Auckland, 20 May.

The ship's stay in Apia was brief and at night. The Hugheses, however, were able to leave the ship and spend a couple of hours with Drs. M. E. Kellogg and F. E. Braucht and the staff at the Apia Sanitarium. There Ella and Cassius Hughes were introduced to some of the bounties of the South Pacific—bananas, pineapples and paw paws. Six days after leaving Samoa and crossing the International Date Line, the Monowai arrived at Auckland, New Zealand. Arrival in this port was about midnight and they had until late afternoon to sight-see in New Zealand's largest city. Here they met the Australian pastor, David Steed, who took them to Mount Eden for a panoramic view of the city and port, and to the Ponsonby Adventist church. This church, dedicated 15 October 1887, was the first building constructed as an Adventist church in the southern hemisphere.

From Auckland the Hugheses crossed the Tasman Sea on the last leg of their journey. This stretch of ocean does experience violent storms, but on this occasion was on its best behavior. In fact, the journey across the Pacific went exceedingly well. Ella reported: "I was a little sick but not so much as I expected. The



*An impression by the artist H. Bruce Durrant of Bethel Hall. Ellen White laid a corner brick for this building on 5 October 1896.*



sailors on the vessel said we might travel a life time and never again have so smooth a voyage as we had from America to Australia. I felt as though it was an answer to all the prayers you were praying for us" (June, 1897). It was still a relief, however, to come to the journey's end and to be met by Edwin Palmer, a familiar face from South Lancaster days, and Elder A. G. Daniells, whom they met for the first time.

## Perceptions of Australia

Cassius and Ella arrived in Sydney on 24 May 1897. The day coincided with the annual holiday celebrated as Queen Victoria's birthday. Their first impressions of Sydney reflected this. Ella recorded:

Flags decorated all the vessels and the public buildings. It was a gay sight. The people were out in holiday costume seeking pleasure and all the business houses were closed. It troubled me to tell the season of the year for people dressed in white mingled with those dressed in flannel and furs (June, 1897).

With May being late Fall in the southern hemisphere, Ella added: "I was comfortable in my thick clothes" (June, 1897).

For their first night in Australia, Cassius and Ella were taken to the newly established Health Home located in the Sydney suburb of Summer Hill. Operating from an imposing residence, Albert and Emma Semmens, nurse graduates from Battle Creek Sanitarium, applied the natural healing principles and scientific methods they had learned under Dr. John Harvey Kellogg. Ella had little to say about the Health Home, but she was impressed with her first taste of Australian culture. She recalled:

In the evening we went to City hall to hear the city organist play on the \$80,000.00 pipe organ. I think it was the finest room I was ever in. The organ is said to be one of the best in the world. The organist is said to receive \$2500.00 yearly for playing two or three times a week. We spent a very delightful evening (June, 1897).

She may have been even more impressed by the organist's retainer had she known that Cassius' annual salary would be only \$780 and that she would receive \$520. Together they would earn about half the sum the grand musician commanded for a few hour's work each week.

The missionary usually arrives at his or her destination harboring preconceptions about their new place of labor. It is not clear what the Hughes expected of Australia, but Ella observed: "Sydney looks very much like Boston with its crooked narrow streets. The buildings are much like those in the cities of



*Temporary accomodation for young men was replaced by this elegant wooden structure in 1898.*

America. The people look and act the same for all I can see" (June, 1897). Not all was the same, however, for Ella was intrigued by the Australian railway car. She described it in detail, including a diagram of the car they traveled in to Cooranbong.

The cars seem queer. There is no passage from on[e] coach to the other. The coach is divided into compartments like this. The heavy marks are the partitions with no openings from one to the other. The little dots are doors and there are windows either side of the doors which can be lowered or closed as the passengers like. The ventilation is obtained that way. The light marks represent the seats. There are (sic) room for six in a compartment by crowding. You enter at the door and before the train starts the porter closes and locks the door. There are no porters on the train but the porters stay at the stations and when the train stops they will open the doors. There is no way of heating the car so traveling long distances in the cold weather is very disagreeable. People carry fur rugs to wrap themselves in so as to keep warmer (June, 1897).

Expatriates, particularly between English-speaking countries, are usually intrigued by the different way in which language develops local meanings. As she became aware of these differences, Ella Hughes shared some of them with her parents.

People never say two weeks here but a fortnight. All the pitchers are "jugs"; the boys are all "lads"; they call each other "chaps." The crackers are all "biscuits." The school seats are "forms," the teacher a "master." They have a peculiar accent to their words which is very pleasant to me. They rarely say excuse me but always "I beg your pardon." The last letter in the alphabet is called zed (18 July 1897).

Furthermore, a spool of silk twist was a "reel." Ella also advised that lawyers were called "solicitors" and that hens were called "fowls" (11 September, 1897). On another occasion she noted that the evening meal is called "tea" (17 December 1897). Over time the Hugheses would have become aware of many more word differences.

Before they came to Australia, it seems likely the Hugheses ate twice a day. It was therefore somewhat of a surprise when they discovered that "the colonials usually eat five times a day:" breakfast, morning tea, dinner, afternoon tea and tea [supper]. The school,

however, provided only the three main meals, but, as Ella advised her parents, there were those who felt “hardly well treated” when required to adapt to this regime (17 December 1897).

It was the Australian flora and fauna, however, that had the greatest impact upon both Cassius and Ella Hughes. They never ceased to marvel at the variety within the Australian

countryside. First impressions were, however, to the contrary. On their initial journey from Sydney to Cooranbong, Ella noted that “the woods are not very pretty for the trees are rather scrappy. They are very large and tall. The trunks of some of them are almost white after they have shed their bark” (June, 1897). Within a short while, however, Ella was writing to her mother:

I’d like to take you all through the woods over to Cooranbong. It is a fine walk. There are many birds in the woods. The bell birds stay by the river. They make a sound like a tiny bell ringing. Ferns are every place. Just now there are pretty purple flowers in flower. They grow on a vine and are like a pea blossom. The gum trees are in blossom and the air is filled with the buzzing of the bees as they gather honey from them. The tea tree has a most dainty little white blossoms (sic). The bouquets made from the maiden hair ferns, wild violets, tea-tree blossoms, &c, are as pretty as though they came from a green house (29 July 1897).

On another occasion she wrote: “I wish you both could have a walk with us through the woods. There are so many queer birds and flowers and trees” (1 August 1898).

Over the two years Ella’s letters contained frequent reference to the beauty of the Australian woods or “bush.” In what proved to be a very busy program, Cassius and Ella had little spare time. They did, however, take regular walks together in the “bush” and this was for them quality time. After one such walk she wrote home that “we gathered a bouquet of fifteen different kinds of flowers.” She added, “we have been here ten months now and there has never been a time when a nice bouquet could not be gathered from the bush” (6 March 1898).

Cassius also waxed eloquent about the local flora. He wrote: “I wish you could see the lovely wild flowers and vines. There have been five vines in bloom so far and a great many kinds of flowers. There is always something new. Some of them are delightfully fragrant” (13 September 1897).

In addition to Australia’s flora, Cassius and Ella were in-



*College Hall, affectionately known as “The Chapel,” was opened by William C. White during April 1899.*

trigued by the new animals they encountered. Soon after their arrival Ella reported: “The boys cut a large tree down... and when it went down two opossums ran out of its top. They were so stunned by the fall that the boys caught them” (18 July 1897). Shortly after their arrival at Avondale, Cassius, assisted by Ella, cut a path through the bush to the Cooranbong village. On their return from the path-making exercise, Ella reported seeing her first kangaroos—two bounded out of the bush and crossed their path. A few weeks later Ella reported her delight when “a small wallaby ran out right in front of me.”

Cassius also reported on kangaroos. He wrote: “While Ella and I were out walking just before sunset we saw a couple of kangaroos in the oats. We could get within about forty yards of them when they would hobble along a little way and wait for us to come up again” (6 November 1897). “Hobble along” was a quaint description of the swinging gait of the kangaroo when moving slowly.

One of the first Australian mammals encountered by the Hugheses was the koala bear, a marsupial. In a postscript to her second letter home Ella wrote: “Cassius and the boys have had fun this morning catching a bear. C— run it up a tree and one of the boys went up the tree and sawed the limb off and let it down. They have killed it now and I’ll have its skin for a rug. The bear is about two feet long. Dark gray” (18 July 1897). Evidently the report of the koala’s demise was premature, for in her next letter Ella advised: “We let the bear go out of pity” (29 July 1897).

Not all Australian fauna, however, was welcome. Ella wrote: “The fleas are very troublesome but they do not make me sick. They are here the year around. I get along best when I wear white underwear for then I can find them” (31 January 1898). On another occasion she noted: “I’ve just stopped writing to catch a flea, but he fled away just as I had my finger on him. He was one of the big ones. Some are very large and some are little tiny ones. I have gotten so I am usually quite expert at catching them” (11 August 1898).

## The School Campus

The two years prior to the official opening of Avondale School for Christian Workers on 28 April 1897 were chiefly spent in clearing some of the land, planting fruit trees and constructing essential buildings. The first permanent building on the Avondale campus was a sixty-foot-square saw mill erected on the north bank of Dora Creek. The loft of this mill served initially as classroom and chapel.

When Cassius and Ella arrived late May, 1897, the school family numbered about fifty students, thirty boarders and twenty day students. Ella described the campus as consisting of two main buildings: "The girls dormitory [Bethel Hall] is a two story building build (sic) of wood and plastered inside. The building used for boy's (sic) dormitory, school room, dining room and kitchen is not completed inside but is comfortable" (June 1897). These buildings were located on a gently sloping knoll. The Hugheses were allocated two rooms on the ground floor of Bethel Hall. From Bethel Hall a view was had of both Dora and Sandy creeks, tidal streams that formed the eastern and southern boundaries of the Avondale estate.

During the six years Cassius and Ella served at Avondale a number of additional buildings were constructed. In August 1897 Ella informed her parents that at the forthcoming board meeting "they expect to lay plans for more buildings the coming year. They want to begin on them right away so as to have them ready when the next school year opens." Toward the end of the year Ella was able to report that "they have begun to lay the foundation of the boys home. They also have the frame work up for a laundry. They expect to have both done by the time school opens three months from now" (17 December 1897).

The 1898 school year was scheduled to commence on 16 March and ten days earlier Ella reported: "The boy's (sic) hall is nearly finished so we will have a hurrying time cleaning every part of the houses before school opens." Evidently Ella was assigned responsibility for ensuring all was in readiness for the new school year for she advised "there will be plenty of help so I shall have only the directing of the work" (6 March 1898).

It was, however, touch-and-go. Ella told her mother: "We had a great rush to get into the school buildings on time. The church people made a bee and helped us three days or else we never could have done it, as it was we opened in fairly good shape" (7 April 1898). This assistance from the church community may well have been in appreciation for school assistance in getting the Cooranbong church completed late 1897. With the completion of the new building, the Hugheses transferred from Bethel Hall to occupy two rooms on the ground floor of the boys dormitory. Ella wrote home: "I have my good carpet down and when I get time to put things to rights it will seem quite like home."

The additional school plant came at financial cost and Ella lamented: "If the debt were off the school we would [be] trying improvements more; but the Lord knows all about it and he



*Preston Hall was added when Bethel Hall (right) needed augmenting as dormitory accommodation for young women.*

know (sic) better what is good than we so we have no need to worry" (7 April 1898). Debt not withstanding, by mid-1898 the board decided to meet the remaining accommodation need of the school with the construction of College Hall. Ella advised her parents that "they decided to

build a new school building immediately so Cassius will have his hands full for a little time looking after that" (17 June 1898). A month later she reported that "the campus is getting to be quite a big cleared space. They are taking down trees now to make a place for the new building" (15 July 1898). One visitor to the school in 1898 commented on the park-like appearance of the campus and noted that she was "astounded at the advanced state of things, so different to the forest I wandered through three years ago" (Union Conference Record, 15 October 1898).

In August 1898 Ella informed her parents that "the school had sold the mill to the Health-food company, and they will turn it into a health-food factory as soon as a few logs are sawed up." She added, "it is a fine thing for the school to get rid of the mill for it has been more than a dead loss to them." Ella appeared excited at the prospects of the food factory establishing itself on the campus and of the personnel who would be joining their community. She enthused: "It is quite a booming time just now for Avondale" (11 August 1898). So began an association between Avondale and the Sanitarium Health Food Company that has spanned 100 years.

## The Educational Program

In its first year, the Avondale School for Christian Workers consisted of a small elementary department and the senior school. This latter was organized into two academic departments: commercial studies and physiology and hygiene. In addition there was the industrial department. These departments provided training for Bible workers and also the first year of the nurses' course. The 1897 report on the school published in the Union Conference Record advised that the school commenced in April with 20 students, but concluded the year in October with 82. Of the total enrollment, 25 were in the elementary department and 17 were day students.



Upon their arrival at Avondale both Cassius and Ella moved straight into their teaching and management responsibilities. In addition to his leadership tasks, Cassius taught history and managed the industrial department. Ella taught English, a Bible and a cooking class for boys on Saturday evenings. Of the performance of her boys, Ella was proud. She declared: "They made better beaten biscuits than any of the girls so the girls are trying hard to do as well" (11 August 1897).

The 1898 school year provided opportunity to fine tune the daily program. Ella reported:

We are trying a new program here this year. We rise at five and have the retiring bell rung at 8:45. We have breakfast at 8: in the morning and dinner at 2: The students study in the chapel instead of in their rooms. They have two study times; one in the morning and one at night (6 May 1898).

The sage counsel of "early to bed and early to rise" was certainly put into practice! While we have this snippet concerning the daily program, neither Cassius's nor Ella's letters gave much information about the curriculum. Neither did they elaborate in a direct way on the purposes of the school. But, as personal letters to loved ones, this was to be expected.

Unwittingly, Ella contributed directly to the formation of another department. During the summer of 1897/98, in addition to supervising the kitchen and dormitory and canning fruit and vegetables, Ella was given responsibility for operating an elementary school with assistance from two young ladies who had expressed an interest in teaching. Concerning these girls, Ella wrote home:

Our primary school is getting along nicely. The two girls take hold of the teaching well. We have classes for the boys in the morning. Cassius has a bible study with them in the morning before breakfast and I have my grammar classes right away after breakfast. The primary school begins at 8 o'clock and lasts until 12 so I have the afternoons to myself except looking after the house work (18 November 1897).

The employment of the two girls was probably intended to aid Ella for she did have responsibilities other than teaching. This unplanned experiment, however, was considered a success



*"The Laurels," a landmark on the Avondale campus which has served many different purposes; including sewing classrooms, accommodation for exchange teachers and Theology offices.*

and the board moved immediately to establish a teachers' department.

Although there were no Adventist church schools in Australia and New Zealand in 1898, it was anticipated that elementary schools would be established in those places where there was a growing Adventist membership. Thus the teachers' department was established in anticipation of a future demand for teachers. This demand did materialize at the turn of the century when church schools were established in a number of places. In presenting its new department to the church-at-large, the school advised that most of the courses of study would be offered within the existing departments, with the addition of courses specific to

teacher education. Furthermore, it indicated that classroom practice would be under the close supervision of an experienced teacher.

To her surprise, Ella Hughes was to be that "experienced teacher." At very short notice, she was given responsibility for the preparatory school and for providing hands-on experience for prospective teachers. Ella was, however, a good choice for she had been responsible for the establishment of a Normal department at South Lancaster Academy. But understandably, she was unprepared for this last-minute appointment. In an uncharacteristically critical vein she wrote her mother: "We have no rooms except bed-rooms for [the] primary school and no decent seats; and I did not know that I was to have anything to do with it until it was just time for it to begin so it will not be much of a success this year I fear" (6 May 1898). But Ella threw herself into making the best of things and immediately sought to remedy a seating problem. She told her mother:

I am trying to get donations to send [to America] for seats. . . . We want to get seventy-five seats. They have the most miserable benches here that I ever saw. We presented the matter to the students yesterday morning and they donated quite liberally seeing they have so little to give. Bro. Haskell and [Bro.] White and Miss Peck are going to help so all around we think we will have the seats (6 May 1898).

Ella's persistence paid off and toward the end of the year she gleefully reported home that "the seats we sent for have come to Sydney. Bro. Sisaly [Sisley] made a donation of the seats to us so we have only to pay the freight on them. We need them so badly that I do not know how to be thankful enough that we have them" (7 October 1898).

In 1898 Ella's elementary and intermediate classes had an enrollment of thirty-six students and were located in two rooms. She had, however, the assistance of three girls, one of

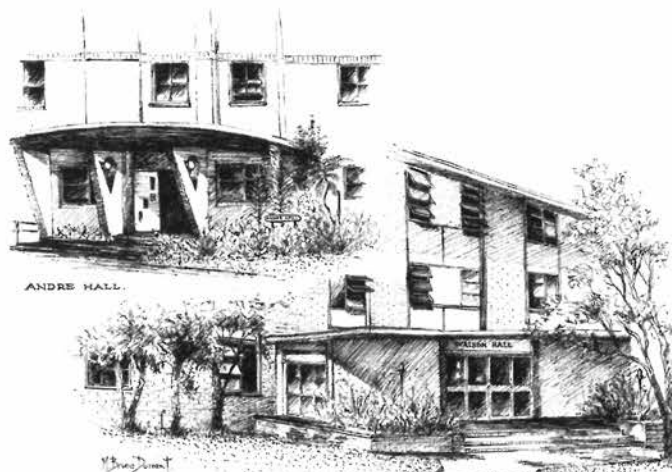
whom was an experienced kindergarten teacher. In addition to this responsibility, Ella also reported that she taught two grammar classes in the senior school (19 May 1898).

Despite her busy schedule, Ella tried to offer a varied and interesting program for her students, including field trips. This too had been a characteristic of her teaching at South Lancaster Academy. She described one field trip for her class thus:

We went about six miles into a valley between two mountains. . . . We started at 9:30 in the morning and reached home at 7 in the evening. We had a most delightful day though we were very tired when we got home. . . . We followed a clear mountain stream for a mile or more. I wish you had been with us for I cannot begin to tell about all we saw. Much of the way we stepped from rock to rock in the branch, the stones were covered inch deep with the most beautiful mosses and sometimes pretty clusters of ferns grew on them too. The mountains and trees were so high on either side that the light was not bright. There were palms and ferns every where. The palms were a hundred or more feet high some of them. After a while we turned to the side and went up a mountain until we were so tired we could go no further but were up high enough so we could look down on the trees and off on mountains far away (26 August 1898).

While Cassius was principal, teacher and head of the industrial department, his few letters provide almost no insight into the administrative and academic programs. He does, however, appear to have been preoccupied with the development of the farm and campus industries. For example, his letter of 13 September 1897 reported on: (1) his trip to Sydney to purchase a Deere cultivator; (2) the purchase of 15 American-style hives; (3) the acquisition of twelve hives of hybrid bees; and (4) the progress of pea, potato and corn crops. In his letter dated 6 November 1897, Cassius noted that he now had 21 active bee hives, that he had purchased an extractor, that the orchard of peaches, lemons, oranges and mandarins was "looking nice"; and his hopes to bring into cultivation an area of swamp land. He also noted that Ellen White showed considerable interest in the industrial program and he affirmed his intention to "do what I can to develop our farm and the industrial plan."

On 17 January 1898 Cassius wrote home that they had "canned about 400 jars of fruit, about one third of which is from our orchard." He also reported that the crops were "growing marvelously" and the bees "doing fine." Furthermore, they expected to raise sufficient potatoes to meet the total needs of the school and he had 800 vines under cultivation. His letter of 11 March 1898 was but one page in length and dealt principally with some advice he shared with his father-in-law. Nevertheless, he slipped in reference to clearing the land, the most



Artist Bruce Durrant portrays the way in which twentieth-century buildings changed the appearance of Avondale College.

suitable grasses, local animal husbandry practices, and a list of the crops they were planting for winter consumption. These letters give the strong impression that Cassius worked extremely hard, but was more farmer than educational administrator.

In fairness to Cassius, he perceived that he carried a strong

prophetic mandate for the emphasis placed on the industrial department. In a presentation to the 1899 Union Conference session, Hughes quoted extensively from Ellen White's 1894 "Special Testimony on Education," including these words: "The school to be established in Australia should bring the question of industry to the front, and reveal the fact that physical labor has its place in God's plan for every man, and that His blessing will attend it." Because it was a part of God's plan, Cassius was determined to implement the work-study program to the fullest.

Ella's letters reinforce the perception that Cassius placed considerable importance upon the development of the industrial department. From time-to-time she proudly recorded Cassius's achievements on the farm. On one occasion she wrote that whereas previous efforts to cultivate the swamp had failed, Cassius was turning it into valuable land through effective drainage and the application of lye (17 December 1897). On another she reported that Cassius "had taken from the bees this summer about a thousand pounds [of honey] and put it away in cans for the use of the school. The honey is light colored and thick. Cassius feels very pleased over the bees" (6 March 1898).

Furthermore, Ella recorded that she and Cassius had traveled down to Sydney. While she did some shopping, Cassius spent a day and a night at the Richmond Agricultural College (31 January 1898). Not content to rely on the knowledge he had acquired in the United States, Cassius was determined to learn all he could from informed local sources.

While Cassius was keen to learn from agricultural authorities, there were those within colonial agriculture who were equally interested in the Avondale experiment. One was a W. S. Campbell, an officer in the Colony's department of agriculture. Campbell had been approached by the Adventist "search party" in 1894 and had pointed them in the direction of a number of properties. Learn-



ing they had eventually purchased at Cooranbong, Campbell visited the school sometime 1898 and was amazed at what he found. He was sufficiently impressed to write a report on the "Industrial College at Cooranbong" published in the *Agricultural Gazette of New South Wales* (February 1899). Given a guided tour by Cassius, Campbell noted that "the progress made has been remarkable, considering the short time it has been established." He continued: "I expected to find something in the way of the usual type Public school one meets with so frequently in the country; but I was never more mistaken in my life." He then proceeded to describe campus development, the vegetarian way of life, the curriculum with its emphasis on practical skills, and the work-study program. He concluded: "There seems every reason to expect that this establishment will turn out good, useful men and women, well able to hold their own in the various callings of life."

Cassius's enthusiastic focus on the industrial program evidently caused the school board to question whether he was fulfilling his role as principal. Sometime early 1898 the Board voted to reduce his salary. Ellen White, however, came quickly to Hughes's defense. She wrote to the board and declared this action to be a mistake. She censured the board for failing to appreciate the sacrifice Cassius was making and pointed out that too much was being expected of the man. Cassius did not, however, escape unscathed for he too received reproof. Ellen White pointed out that in his commitment to physical labor he had neglected his administrative responsibilities, particularly his role as pastor (Ellen White to Avondale School Board, 28 April 1898). Although Ellen White referred to the discouragement the board action brought to the Hugheses, neither Cassius nor Ella made any mention of this in their letters home.

Despite Ellen White's criticism, the Hugheses did see the importance of the school's spiritual role and found pleasure in the spiritual formation that took place in the lives of students. At the end of the first school year Ella reported on student baptisms. She advised that "fourteen were baptized two weeks ago and five yesterday. All but one were students. . . . It has been a good school year for us. It is well that it has been for the school has worked under many discouragements and this term will

give the people more courage in the enterprise" (12 October 1897). At the end of the second year there was a similar report. One Sabbath twenty-one were baptized (26 August 1898) and some weeks later a further ten (25 September 1898).

## The Cooranbong Community

The Hugheses were fascinated by the rural community and small village adjacent to the Avondale property. In an early letter home, Ella described it as follows: Cooranbong is a little old village. It is a nice cleared place and green grass all around. The mountains rise up back of the village. The town consists of a few little old dwellings, two hotels, a nice one story stone post-office, a police station, one store, what was once a convent, a little church (sic) of Eng-



*An early view of Avondale faculty homes with Preston Hall at the right of the photograph, adjacent to the dining room and kitchen.*

land and I think a Catholic church with a grave yard by it. The road is fine but no walks and you hardly know it was a town in passing through (29 July 1897).

As they began to travel about in the community, the Hugheses became aware of the impoverished condition of the people. This impoverishment was as much a matter of mind as it was economic. To her mother Ella observed:

This is a dreary looking country. There are no nicely cultivated farms. I do not see how the people live. There are many houses along the road. But there is not a sign of a garden or cultivated field any place. No stock of any kind seems to be about. There are a few orange and lemon trees at nearly every house and they are





*Avondale's development from an industrial enterprise to tertiary college emphasized hard work for "farm boys."*

just loaded with fruit. The soil would produce if they would only cultivate it" (15 July 1898).

Although it was never stated, maybe Cassius was motivated in part in his emphasis upon successful agricultural practice to demonstrate what could be done when hard work was combined with useful knowledge. Toward the end of the second year the Hugheses acquired a horse and cart. Ella quickly learned to hitch the horse and drive and this provided the Hugheses with greater access to the community around Cooranbong.

### **An Australian Campmeeting**

The 1897 school year was concluded two weeks early to permit the faculty and students to attend the campmeeting scheduled for the last two weeks in October. So that the academic program would not be affected by the reduced term, Ella informed her mother that "we have school now on Sundays to make up for the two weeks that will be cut off from the end [of term]" (26 August 1897).

The campmeeting, which convened in Stanmore, a suburb of Sydney, provided Ella and Cassius with their first opportunity to enjoy the ambiance of Adventism "down under" and Ella enjoyed sharing minute details with her parents. She wrote:

The camp is in a fine grassy field with houses all around. Two large tents and a good many little ones make up the camp. Ours is number 60. There is a rough board building used for kitchen and grocery. They have no dining tent but sell cooked food by the pint or quart at meal times from the kitchen. It saves a lot of work for those who usually work in the dining tent and seems very satisfactory to all concerned. We buy some food but most of it I cook on our new little oil stove. It is a fine one that does not smoke or smell bad. It generates gass (sic) and the gas burns. We start it with a little alcohol. It cost 10 s, 6 pen. or \$2.52. We bought it here in Sydney. . . .

We are comfortably settled in a good tent. It has a floor and a fly and I have put up curtains so that there are three rooms. One of the boys that works on the farm stays with us. It is the best fixed up camp-ground I was ever on. It has to be nice because it is in the city. . . . (23 October 1897).

Apart from the fellowship and spiritual nurture provided for the Australasian believers, one purpose of the campmeeting was to make Sydney aware of the Adventist presence. Ella noted:

It is Sunday evening now. Eld. Farnsworth is preaching. There is such a crowd that there is no room for me and so I will stay at home and write. Sr. White spoke yesterday and this afternoon. The crowd was too great to hear her this afternoon. Here they make a great effort to reach the city people. The only meetings for our people are early morning ones. They are excellent meetings. The crowd does not look any different from the American crowds as I can see. There have been hundreds of people on the ground today. . . . People keep coming and looking into our tent. They seem to think we are here to be looked at. . . . (23 October 1897).

To capitalize on the interest generated, meetings were continued in the tent for several months after the campmeeting concluded. Elder Stephen Haskell, Bible teacher at the Avondale school, was assigned to be the preacher through the summer months. This connection between the school and the mission outreach ensured Ella maintained a continuing interest. She therefore kept her parents informed of progress. Within a month of the commencement of the meetings she advised that "twenty-five have begun to keep the Sabbath and interest continues." She also observed: "Sr. White has written back that it is more like the 1844 movement than anything she has seen since that time" (18 November 1897). One month later the number was "over forty" and Ella noted, "they are going to build a meeting house near where they had the tents pitched for the camp-meeting" (17 December 1897).

The meetings continued to generate interest through the summer months and Ella reported that "Bro. & Sis. Haskell are not coming until a month after school opens" (6 March 1898). The success of the Haskell city mission therefore had implications for the Avondale faculty. Ella for one did not complain, but noted that Sarah Peck, one of Ellen White's assistants, would take Mrs. Haskell's classes until she returned. Her letter of 22 April 1898 informed her parents that the new church at Stanmore would be dedicated the next Sabbath.

### **Adventism in Australia**

During the first two years, with the exception of the Stanmore camp, Ella and Cassius had little exposure to the wider church in Australia. The demands of the school year and their many responsibilities kept them very much at Avondale. Ella Hughes did not, therefore, say very much about the church in Australia. What she did say, however, was very positive. In one letter to her parents Ella not-

ed that “the people here love the truth and are just as willing to sacrifice for it as the people back home. The Sabbath keepers here mostly live in the cities but they are a nice class of people if we can judge from the young people in school” (4 June 1898).

This comment was prompted by two things. First, a collection at the conclusion of the week of prayer raised 45 pounds despite the fact that the members were “all poor people.” Ella was impressed with this sacrificial giving. Second, advice that the General Conference found it necessary to cut back on the money it sent to Australasia. While acknowledging the large local debt, Ella and Cassius viewed this positively. She wrote: “We think the Gen. Con. have (sic) taken a wise course for although it is very uncomfortable just at present some lessons in economy will be learned that are not learned when there is plenty of money” (4 June 1898).

### Ellen G. White

For Cassius and Ella Hughes, one of the highlights of their Australian experience was the close proximity and influence of Ellen G. White. Within days of their arrival at Cooranbong, Ella wrote:

We have walked over to see Sr. White twice. She looks the same as she did when I saw her last nine years ago for all I can tell. She has been unusually well for a year or more. Just now she is suffering from over exertion getting the school enterprise started. We unpacked the cake of maple sugar last night so I have not taken it to her yet. She seemed pleased when I told her about it. Said she could not eat it herself but she would have it to give pieces to others (June, 1897).

To her sister, Ada, Ella acknowledged the considerable contribution Ellen White made to the establishment of the school and her continuing involvement. She also expressed her amazement at Ellen White’s vitality:

Sr. White comes quite often to talk to the students at chapel time. I think you would enjoy them. She is coming again in the morning.



*To the modern observer, the range of enterprises in which Avondale engaged seems remarkable.*

Sr. White takes a great interest in the school. She was about prostrated from her effort to get it started. Now she is feeling well again. She comes up the stairs as spry as though she were a girl of fifteen. Our chapel is up stairs. She directs a good deal of the work that is done on her place (18 July 1897).

In particular, Ellen White’s support of practical education was appreciated. To her mother Ella confided: “Her [Ellen White’s] help is very valuable to us in planning the school work. She believes in the in-

dustrial part with all her heart. She said the other day that it is the most important part” (26 August 1897).

Ellen White also urged student involvement in missionary outreach. Ella reported:

Sr. White spoke last Sabbath. She seems to be real well. She made a strong appeal to the young people. Many of our students are doing a good deal of missionary work going out among the people in the neighborhoods around. Most of the people are poor and ignorant. The people say that the coming of Seventh-day Adventists has been a great blessing to the community (11 August 1898).

It would appear that proximity to the prophetess was not perceived as daunting, but as a privilege. One senses the empathy Ella felt with the positive influence of Ellen White. To her parents she wrote:

Sr. White spoke last Sabbath also today. Her sermons are just as powerful as they always have been. They are full of love and hope and courage. The burden of her sermons lately seems to be “Arise and shine for thy light has come.” I wish you could hear her for yourselves. I think about you all so often when she is speaking (12 September 1897).

Ella felt the personal benefits of the “industrial plan” followed at Avondale. She advised, “I still keep up my working out of doors and it keeps me feeling well.” It would appear that her brother, Newton, worked in an office and Ella urged that he try and arrange for “some real work out of doors every day.” Newton’s wellbeing was on her mind and to the “dear ones at

home" she wrote:

I had thought about it a good deal myself and when I heard Sr. White talk about it more than a month ago I felt that I must write to him. She made the statement that a student, working out of doors part of each day could accomplish in two years what would take him four years to do if he staid in doors and did not do the work. Another time she said it made students better morally to work the soil. She said. . . they ought to make themselves get out and work. (12 October 1897).

Ella's sister, Ada, was of a sickly disposition and in her letters Ella frequently expressed concern for Ada's wellbeing. As with Newton, she felt Ada would benefit greatly from outdoor activity. She declared: "I wish Ada would plan to work in the garden even if it does make her sick and tired for a time. I believe she would get well if she would persevere in that way. . . . Sr. White has told us of how she used to get well by working in the garden. She especially likes to work with strawberry plants" (7 April 1898).

Evidently, in response to a question from home, Ella raised the matter of drugs with Ellen White. She reported back to her mother:

I talked with Sr. White about drugs. I don't know whether I can make it plain to you for I do not fully understand the distinction she makes. She is very emphatic in her statement that no drugs should be used but she said there are some herbs and simple medicines that are helpful. She spoke especially of rhubarb being useful in some cases of bowel troubles. Then I have heard her recommend the use of Eucalyptis (sic) oil. They get that from the gum trees here. She spoke against all patent medicines for we do not know what is in them (7 April 1898).

While Ella wrote very positively of relationships with Ellen White, it is not clear whether she felt the same way about W. C. White. On one occasion she wrote that "Bro. White was over to breakfast. He came over early to help plan a place for the laundry. . . . He is president of the school board so we have to have his voice in all that is done. He takes a great interest in school matters" (18 November 1897). Ella always wrote in generous terms about people, therefore her statement that "we have to have his voice in all that is done," gives the impression there was a perception that W. C. White involved himself a little too much in the running of the school.

### Ella and Cassius Hughes

In addition to the letter cited above, what do the "letters home from abroad" reveal about Ella and Cassius Hughes as

persons? More is, perhaps, revealed about Ella since she was the principal correspondent. Her letters reveal her to be of a sunny and optimistic disposition. She tended to see her most recent experience as "the best." For example, pineapples she tasted in Samoa were "the best I ever tasted," the City Hall the "finest room I was ever in," the Avondale water melons were "the finest I ever ate," Stanmore was the "best-fixed up campground I was ever on," and upon its completion she declared "we have the nicest kitchen I think I was ever in" (7 April 1898).

Her letters are noteworthy, however, for their lack of criticism of others. Rather, Ella spoke in positive terms about her associates. For example, Mrs. Haskell was "a fine woman," she enjoyed Elder Haskell's preaching, and Sarah Peck was "a splendid help." Of the students she wrote "they are bright nice young people." In another letter she described them as "a nice earnest set of students." On one occasion she wrote: "I am fond of the pupils. As a whole they are more earnest than any other



*Clearing the land of stumps and roots provided many young men with a way to earn money for their education at Avondale.*

class of students I ever had. I have one of the nicest bible classes. It is a treat to hear it recite" (11 August 1897). Such positive perceptions of students reveals much about the attitude of the teacher. Ella Hughes saw the good in people. Furthermore, she put herself out for people. Ella took a special interest in a student from Japan and gained considerable pleasure in his progress. With a degree of pride she told the dear ones at home that her Japanese pupil was getting along nicely and that "he spoke in [the] meeting last Friday night and says he wants to be baptized" (11 August 1898).

Although Ella commented on being rushed for time and



## Ellen White and School Games

Although not a part of the set of letters which constitute the focus of this article, there is a further letter written by Cassius Hughes at a later time but which centered directly on the relationship between Ellen White and the Avondale school. In response to a query from William C. White, Cassius Hughes recounted a significant incident which took place in April 1900. This incident provides the background to Ellen White's counsel given in pages 348-54 of *Counsels to Parents and Teachers*. Hughes recalled:

As we drew near the anniversary of the erection of our main building at the Avondale School, I suggested to the faculty that we observe the day by making it a holiday. To this the Faculty assented. . . I suggested that we ask Sister White to deliver an address in the early part of the day, and that the remainder of the day be spent in games. . .

I had used my influence against the playing of football at the school, but sometime before this holiday, cricket [an English bat and ball game] had been introduced by one of the teachers. Against this I offered no objection. While I thought it wrong to spend much time playing games, I thought it proper to spend some time this way. . . As the girls could not play cricket, it was thought best to purchase an outfit for playing tennis on the holiday. I joined the teachers and students in contributing toward its purchase. . . The students enjoyed the day very much, and at the close of it they felt grateful toward me, especially for planning such a pleasant time. . .

. . . so I was feeling very light hearted next morning, and was just on the point of leaving my house for school when Sister White's carriage drove up and I was informed she wished to speak to me. I went out to her carriage and she leaned out toward me and said in very earnest tones, "I have come over to talk to you and your teachers and your students about the way you spent yesterday. Get your teachers together. I want to speak to them before I go in to speak to the students. If Sister White had struck a full blow in the face I do not think I would have felt so hurt as I did at her words. What she said sounded so unreasonable to me. I believed that what we had done the day before was for the best interests of the students. She talked to me as an old woman who had no sympathy with the needs of the youth. To say that I was indignant hardly expresses the feeling I had, but I had a great deal of respect for Sister White, so that notwithstanding the grievous (sic) mistake I thought she was making, I replied not a word. . . When she met with the teachers, I think they were about as surprised as I, and some of them, at least, fully as indignant, for when she told them what she

intended to say, one of them remarked that if she knew so much about running a school, he would advise her to come over and take charge. . .

I very much feared that it would result in some of the students leaving us, but under the circumstances I thought best to say nothing, although I was very much tempted to advise her not to talk to the students that morning. We went into the chapel and she delivered her talk, but it did not produce the commotion that I expected. In fact the students generally seemed to receive it quite well, but not so with myself. It was the beginning of one of the darkest experiences of my life. I felt that Sister White was unreasonably extreme in the matter, and that she contradicted herself, for my mind at once reverted to some statements of hers,—that teachers should play with their students, but I kept these thoughts to myself. I did not even tell my wife what a struggle I was having. . .

When Miss Peck came over a day or two afterwards, without revealing the condition I was in, I asked her why it was Sister White advised in her testimonies for teachers to play with their students, and then rebuked us for doing it. . . When Miss Peck came over again she said Sister White replied that our students were not children, but were young men and women preparing to be laborers for God, and that it was a waste of their time to do such things. This did not clear the matter up, so I took the Bible and concordance to see what I could find. . .

Among other passages, I found the one in Corinthians,—"Know ye not that they which run a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize." As I considered this passage, I received an entirely new thought in regard to the nature of games. . . I saw clearly that the spirit of games is the spirit of war. . . I think it was about three days after Sister White addressed us before the matter cleared up [in my mind]. The students received the message given them readily. It was at once determined to sell the tennis set and put the proceeds into the Missionary Society. The cricket games ceased, and if there was any serious opposition on the part of the students, I never heard of it (C. B. Hughes to W. C. White, 22 July 1912).

It was not always easy living and working in close proximity to the prophet, particularly when that person took a special and proprietary interest in the school. The manner in which Cassius Hughes handled the situation and himself provides an insight into his character and the way in which he resolved conflict—both to his credit.

feeling tired, she did not do so in a complaining manner. Rather, she appeared to accept the difficulties of a pioneering situation and recognized that everyone, herself included, had to work hard and long. Where problems existed, and she could do something about them, Ella acted. A good example was her

procurement of the improved classroom seating. To her parents she wrote: "I am real well. Hard work seems to agree with me" (31 January 1898). Toward the end of her first and busy summer she declared: "You would be surprised to see the amount of work I get through with and how well I keep" (6 March 1898).



And toward the end of their second year, Ella wrote of herself and Cassius: "How good it is that we are all blessed with so good health as we have. I cannot be thankful enough that I am so well" (26 August 1898).

Although within three-hours train travel of Sydney, Ella did not pine for city life. She appears to have been well content with the relative isolation of Avondale. In fact, during the first two years in Australia the Hugheses saw little of Australia beside the area around the school and the occasional visit to Sydney. But without complaint. In fact, Ella's comments were most positive. She wrote: "I get along nicely with so many things on hand and so I have nothing to complain of. . . . We have been wonderfully blessed in having our surroundings so pleasant" (7 April 1898). Early August 1898 Ella and Cassius celebrated their fifth wedding anniversary and Ella observed: "We little thought five years ago when we were married that we would ever be in Australia. God has been good to us and we have very much to be thankful for" (11 March 1898). It was no doubt a comfort to her parents to know she and Cassius were happy and contented in a far off land.

There can be no questioning Ella's capacity for hard work. This was particularly evident during her first summer in Australia. Left to run the summer school program, the Hugheses accepted multiple roles. Ella taught the elementary school, acted as preceptress, supervised the kitchen and preserved fruit. Concerning this task, Ella reported at the end of January that she had put up 500 cans of fruit or about half of the planned stock. As Ella explained, the canning process was primitive and labor-intensive. It involved preparing and placing the fruit in cans and sterilizing them in a copper. The copper she used could take nineteen cans at a time (31 January 1898). By March Ella was able to up-date the figure and advise that 1,000 two quart cans had been preserved, as well as "wine and tomatoes and jam and jelly," with more yet to come. By their example the Hugheses demonstrated a healthy work ethic.

The simple and uncomplicated attitude to life exemplified by the Hugheses is seen in the things that gave them pleasure. In addition to the stroll through the woods, Ella and Cassius enjoyed the relaxation of an occasional row on Dora Creek, a boating excursion on Lake Macquarie, exploration of the Cooranbong area with horse and buggy, and on one trip to



*Only a few Avondale pioneers lived to see a tractor replace horse-drawn implements.*

Sydney they fitted in a trip across the harbor to Manly beach. And Ella took every opportunity to work in the flower beds she cultivated. This outdoor activity was therapeutic.

It is more difficult to comment on Cassius. Because fewer of his letters are extant, we obtain less insight into the man. Based on the four letters in the set, however, we can judge that he was totally committed to the industrial side of the program. Bringing land into cultivation, planting hun-

dreds of grape vines, extracting honey from the hives, purchasing livestock, and improving the pasture were tangible things that gave him much pleasure.

One gains the impression that he was a quiet but steady leader, not given to flamboyance nor display. Rather, he demonstrated to the students the dignity of manual work by working with them and showing how. Ellen White appreciated and warmly endorsed his approach. She wrote: "Brother Hughes does not say, 'Go, boys,' but pulls off his coat and says, 'Come, boys.' He works with them. He is the right man for the place. All take hold with a will, cheerfully" (Letter 164, 1897).

Cassius appears to have cared for the wellbeing of the students and to have treated them with courtesy and consideration. Enrollments grew during his tenure and Ella reported on several occasions that the boarding accommodation was filled to capacity. This suggests that reports by the students to parents and friends were positive. That Cassius was able to establish a healthy school climate was attested to by Julia Malcolm who visited Avondale in 1898. Writing in the Union Conference Record, Malcolm commented on the "air of contentment and cheerfulness" that pervaded the campus. She added: "The secret of the peace of this school home, is the fact that peace and good-will are evidently in the hearts of teachers and students alike. . . ."

One final comment we might make about Cassius Hughes relates to his methodical and calm approach to a perplexing issue. On the matter of school sports, although angry and hurt by the stance taken by Ellen White, as a responsible leader Cassius controlled his own emotions and sought to dampen down the volatility of some staff. He also determined to study the issues carefully for himself. He found his starting point in Scripture and, having established biblical principles that appeared to support Ellen White's stance, he did not question the matter fur-

ther. It would also appear that Cassius found in Scripture the basic rationale for his commitment to the educational value of manual labor. In his presentation to the delegates at the 1899 Union Conference session, Cassius began with the premise that God worked and put man in a garden “to dress it and keep it.” Manual work was therefore normative and, with the entry of sin, palliative.

Cassius and Ella Hughes served at Avondale for six years. Their fidelity to the ideal of Adventist schooling helped establish Avondale as the model Adventist school. A previous generation of Adventist educators had struggled to understand the educational ideals espoused by Ellen White. Battle Creek College had proven a “faulty pattern.” Avondale, on the other hand, given the prophet’s guiding hand and the commitment of its founding principal, became the “true pattern.” At Avondale the focus on Bible, the missionary spirit, and the work-study approach to learning, all in a rural setting, moved Adventist education beyond the experimental stage.

It would appear that the years 1897–1900 represented a prolific period in Ellen White’s writing on education. Avondale was established in response to White’s conceptualization of true education. But there is also a sense in which the Avondale experience contributed to the richness of the prophet’s educational insights. The Hughes letters we have explored have provided a brief, but incomplete glimpse of the beginnings of the proud tradition that is Avondale.



*This wooden structure served as the men’s dormitory for almost seven decades, before it was replaced by Haskell Hall, named in honor of Stephen N. Haskell who led the first Adventist missionaries to Australia in 1885.*



*Looking from College Hall toward the women’s dormitories, Preston Hall (left) and Bethel Hall (right).*



# A Colorful Patchwork Quilt

**Brian E. Strayer**

*The Midnight Cry*. Lathika International Film & Entertainment 1994. 102 minutes.

Like the colorful patchwork quilts stitched by nineteenth century Victorians, the producers of *The Midnight Cry* have attempted to recreate some of the regional and national color of America's antebellum fabric at the time of William Miller's rise to prominence in the 1840s. Although narrated by Academy Award-winning actor Cliff Robertson, one frequently hears primary documents (letters, diaries, newspapers) read in the Yankee twang of Maine and Massachusetts. Local color includes stunning on-location shots featuring New England's famous autumn leaves. Verisimilitude is further enhanced by the frequent use of paintings, sketches, photographs, period artifacts, on-site choreography, early film footage and period music (cello, piano, and Candace Varmer's delightful vocal solos).

This film documentary surpasses previous Adventist attempts to portray on film the triumphs and tragedies of the Millerite experience. While scriptwriters Ron Knott and Dennis O'Flaherty feature three renowned historians (George Knight of Andrews University, Ruth Alden Doan of Hallons College, and David Rowe of Middle Tennessee State University) as interpreters of the Millerite saga, this video, unlike *Three Angels Over Battle Creek* (1996), is not composed of "talking heads." Knight, Doan and Rowe provide useful analysis to help the viewer piece together the many "patches" (social, political, economic, religious) of the quilt that was Millerism. And unlike the much longer (four videos, eight parts) Australian-produced *Keepers of the Flame* (1989), *The Midnight Cry* is definitely not apologetic or evangelistic in tone. Viewers see and hear not only Miller's opponents ridiculing the movement (cartoons, satires and the myths about orgies, ascension robes and insanity receive prominent attention), but also become aware of the internal fanaticism which afflicted the movement in late 1844 (such as Samuel Snow's "Elijah the Prophet" aberration). Also, unlike *Keepers of the Flame*, *The Midnight Cry* does not exaggerate the role of Ellen Harmon in the Millerite movement. Indeed, Ellen is mentioned only three times: in connection with hearing Miller preach in Portland, Maine; when her family is expelled from the Chestnut Street Methodist Church; and as a founder of the Sabbatarian Adventist group.

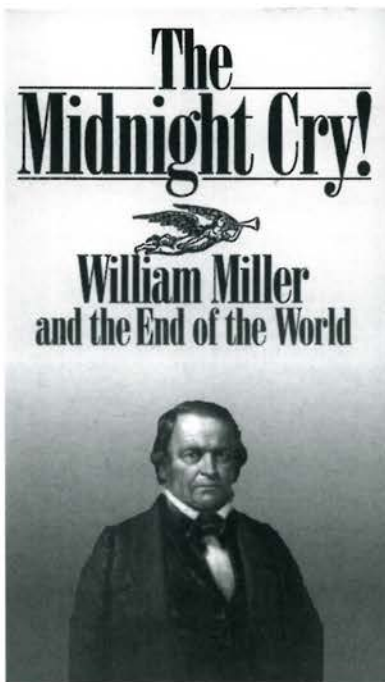
The editor, Lewis Blanchette, has taken pains to insure that the Millerite movement is properly contextualized. Viewers are introduced to some of the most influential political leaders

(John Tyler, John Q. Adams, Henry Clay, James Polk), editors (William Garrison, Horace Greeley, James Bennett), inventors (Samuel Morse and Phineas Barnum), writers (Alexander Dumas and John Greenleaf Whittier), and religious leaders or groups (Charles Finney, the Shakers, Joseph Smith and the Mormons) of the era. For the most part, all theological jargon (such as pre- and post-millennialism, deism, sanctuary, Babylon and Midnight Cry) are clearly explained, although the non-Adventist viewer will be puzzled by references to a "tarrying time" and the inadequately explained 1260 and 2300 day prophecies.

To some extent, the reach of *The Midnight Cry* for contextualization exceeds its grasp. American social historians will be pleased at the attention given to antebellum temperance, anti-slavery, utopian and religious movements. But they will be sorely disappointed in the complete absence of the women's rights efforts of Susan B. Anthony, Amelia Bloomer (*The Lily*), and the Quaker Mott sisters long before the 1848 Seneca Falls convention. Unfortunately, this video's rather male-centric (white, Anglo-Saxon) view of history carries over into its interpretation of Millerism as well. Where are the women of *The Midnight Cry*? Where is Clorinda Minor, editor of *The Advent Message to the Daughters of Zion*, the only Millerite newspaper for women? Where are the more than fifteen women (such as Lucy Stoddard, Abigail Mussey, Lucy Hersey, and Elvira Fassett) who preached Christ's return? Why does the video omit black preachers such as William Foy, Charles Bowles, and John Lewis, whose roles in the movement deserve even more attention than that of Ellen Harmon? The omission of the child

preachers of Sweden highlights yet a third lacuna of this video—its focus is exclusively on North America. The viewer gains no insights into the global impact of millennialism with the preaching of Joseph Wolff in the Middle East, Edward Irving in Britain, Manuel de Lacunza in South America and Thomas Playford in Australia.

But if the producers of *The Midnight Cry* commit some glaring errors of omission, there are few errors of commission in facts and interpretation. In its rather fast-paced collage of



See *Midnight Cry*, page 36



# The Story of the *Bible Commentary*

**Raymond F. Cottrell**

Seventh-day Adventist study of the Bible came of age with publication of the seven-volume *SDA Bible Commentary* during the years 1953 to 1957. The proof-text method of interpretation used for doctrinal apologetics began to give way to an objective investigation of Scripture using the historical-contextual-linguistic method.

Prior to the *Commentary*, Adventist books about the Bible usually assumed the dogmatic role of a teacher; the *Commentary* chose the more humble role of a student listening intently in order to hear what the Bible has to say. It eschewed a closed mind, naively content with the illusion of already being in possession of all truth, for an open mind in quest of an ever more complete and accurate understanding of Scripture. It recognized and respected alternative interpretations of moot passages of Scripture and, upon occasion, acknowledged the fact that we do not have all of the answers. Its objective was not to get in the last word on every point of interpretation but to encourage and assist readers in reaching their own conclusions. For the *Commentary*, Bible study became a continuing pilgrimage into the truth.

The *Commentary* became the first publication of the church to deal with the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation in a systematic, expository way. It was the first to base its comment consistently on the text of the Bible in the original languages instead of an English translation, and first to make consistent use of state-of-the-art archaeological information in an endeavor to recreate the historical circumstances within which each passage was written and to which it was addressed. It was first to make consistent use of variant readings in the ancient manuscripts wherever these clarify a statement or resolve a problem in the text.

Most of the 37 contributors were adequately trained, experienced, dedicated Bible scholars who had been serving the church as college Bible teachers over the preceding 20 years.

The index to Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words considered in the *Commentary* (see Vol. 7, pp. 996-1017) reflects the endeavor of the contributors and the editors to provide as accurate an understanding as possible of the meaning the inspired writers of the Bible intended their words to convey. The exhaustive subject index on pages 1022 to 1167 enables *Commentary* readers to readily locate information on every Bible topic considered in its 7,949 pages. The 34 introductory articles in the seven volumes, together with an introduction to each book of the Bible, were designed to provide a wealth of information on such subjects as historical, chronological and cultur-

al background, and on the writing and interpretation of Scripture all of vital importance in understanding the Bible. Finally, the *Commentary* gave every church member instant access to the best information Seventh-day Adventist Bible scholars could provide.

The story begins with two remarkable men, J.D. Snider, who initiated the project, and F.D. Nichol, who carried it through to a successful conclusion. The story of the *Commentary* is basically the story of these two men, and the kind of people they were in large measure explains its success over the past 30 years.

## **J.D. Snider, Dreamer Extraordinary**

The *Commentary* germinated in the fecund mind of J.D. Snider (1889-1976), Review and Herald book department manager from 1936 to 1967. J.D., as his friends affectionately knew him, was endowed with the rare gift of anticipating books designed to respond to a particular need, of finding the right people to write them, and of inspiring still other creative people to help him translate his dreams into reality. His success was legendary; if J.D. was for a project, it was certain to succeed.

J.D.'s consuming passion during his tenure as book department manager found ingenuous expression in the title of his classic *I Love Books* (1942), which sold a quarter of a million copies and was translated into several languages. His personal library of 25 000 volumes likewise mutely witnessed to the ardor of his lifelong love affair with books, and over his office door the theme of his life was embossed in wood: "Without a love for books, the richest man is poor."

The idea of a Seventh-day Adventist commentary on the Bible took root in J.D.'s thinking as the result of a persistent demand for classical commentaries such as those of Jamieson, Faussett and Brown, Adam Clarke, and Albert Barnes—all of nineteenth century vintage and not always in harmony with the Adventist understanding of the Bible. He foresaw the value of an up-to-date Adventist commentary to the church and believed it feasible to produce a major work of such dimensions within a reasonable time and at a viable cost.

## **Enter Francis D. Nichol**

As commander-in-chief of the *Commentary* project, Snider and the Review and Herald board selected Francis D. Nichol, who had served for the preceding 23 years as associate editor and then editor-in-chief of the *Review and Herald* (now the *Ad-*

ventist Review). With Nichol's 30 years of editorial experience and authorship of a score of books, several of them requiring painstaking research and accuracy, Snider and the board had good reason to believe that Nichol was the right man for the job and the person most likely to make the project a success. Nichol knew the Bible was sensitive to the mood and needs of the church, had the sound judgment to make the product both useful and acceptable to a church sensitive on doctrinal matters, and he enjoyed the confidence of all whose participation would be necessary in order to transform the idea into reality.

Nichol accepted the challenge of the *Commentary* in addition to his full-time job as editor of the *Review*, and gave both of them his formidable thought and drive at the rate of 12 to 13 hours a day, six days a week, for six years. He had the dubious reputation of running a marathon race at the pace of a hundred-yard dash. He was at his desk by four-thirty every morning and expected the same of his editorial associates on the *Commentary*. He usually worked evenings as well, and often Saturday nights.

With his consummate editorial skill Nichol was ever aware of the limits of his knowledge and relied heavily on the expertise of others in their respective fields of competence. He often referred to his editorial role as that of "a broker of other men's brains."

As editor of the *Review*—a post of responsibility and influence usually considered to be second only to the General Conference president—Nichol had a high sense of editorial prerogative and responsibility, which he often reverently remarked he had learned from his illustrious predecessor, F.M. Wilcox. He listened intently to everyone, and when he recognized a valid point he incorporated it into his decision making. But on more than one occasion he said to me: "No one, not even the president of the General Conference, can tell me what goes into the *Review* or what does not. Of course, they can have me fired if I make an irresponsible decision."

## The Commentary Team

In consultation with teachers at the Seventh-day Adventist

Theological Seminary and a few trusted friends, Elder Nichol assembled members of the *Commentary* team. The full-time team consisted of Don F. Neufeld and Raymond F. Cottrell, associate editors, and Julia Neuffer, assistant editor. There were, as well, six part-time editors—making a total of ten. The major prerequisite was expertise in Hebrew and Greek. As for editorial skills, Nichol would provide on-the-job training.

Julia Neuffer was already established as the *Review's* research specialist. She had majored in archaeology and Near Eastern antiquity at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, and since the late 1940s had worked in close association with Lynn H. Wood and later Siegfried H. Horn on an ad hoc committee of the General Conference on the chronology of Ezra 7. Upon the recommendation of Dr. Horn she was chosen by Elder Nichol to write the chronology articles for Volumes 1 to 3 and 5 of the *Commentary*. Her chief concern was matters of factual detail for which she was often sent to the Library of Congress. Her penchant for accuracy was notorious.

At the time Nichol called me to join him at the *Review and Herald*, I

was teaching biblical exegesis at Pacific Union College, where my wife, Elizabeth, and I had been for 11 years. We arrived in Takoma Park late in September 1952, and began work on the *Commentary* on the first day of October. During those five years I invested more than 15,000 hours in concentrated study of every verse of the Bible. At the conclusion of work on the *Commentary* and the retirement of Frederick Lee in 1957 Elder Nichol invited me to join the *Review* staff as an associate editor.

Early in 1953 Elder Nichol invited Don F. Neufeld, head of the Bible department at Canadian Union College, to join our team. He arrived with his wife, Maxine, and their family in June, at the close of the school year. Don was an expert in Hebrew and Greek, and over the years he made his own transla-



Francis D. Nichol, architect and editor-in-chief of the SDA Bible Commentary



tion of several books of both the Old and New Testaments. He was painstakingly careful and accurate in his explication of the Bible, eminently logical in his reasoning processes, and meticulous in his use of language.

Never having met each other before the *Commentary* brought us together, Don and I had independently formulated identical principles of exegesis, and from time to time each of us felt constrained to express happy surprise at finding the other following the same principles. This not only made our work together congenial, but resulted in a much more uniform product than would otherwise have been possible. Of course we both followed the linguistic-contextual-historical method, but even more to our mutual surprise, identical principles in the interpretation of Bible prophecy.

Our auxiliary editorial team consisted of Leona Running, Earle Hilgert, Alger Johns, Herbert Douglas, Bernard Seton and James Cox, who participated variously from a few months to as much as two years. The first two were teachers at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary; the others were graduate students recommended by the Seminary faculty. Leona Running and Alger Johns were simultaneously studying with William Foxwell Albright at Johns Hopkins University in nearby Baltimore.

In any exposition of the Old Testament, an accurate and comprehensive knowledge of archaeology and ancient history is vital. Though not formally a member of the *Commentary* team, Dr. Siegfried H. Horn, recognized by his fellow archaeologists as unexcelled in his field, provided that expertise—both in the planning stage and throughout the editorial process. In addition, he wrote 929 pages of the *Commentary*—more than any other contributor.

### The Writers and the Writing

For writers, Elder Nichol logically turned to the Bible teachers in our North American colleges and the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. He visited each campus, interviewing candidates and exploring their areas of expertise, interest and willingness to participate. Later he made specific assignments, stipulated the number of pages for each and set up mutually agreeable target dates. Each writer received a formal contract that promised the munificent sum of one dollar per manuscript page—scarcely enough to pay for typing the manuscript! The privilege of participating in the project was, presumably, to be a writer's principal reward.

Elder Nichol's aspirations for the *Commentary* are reflected

in the ten pages of his "Instructions to *Commentary* Writers." "First and most importantly," he wrote, it is to be "exegetical" where appropriate it could also be "homiletical. It was to provide Seventh-day Adventists with "a work free of...doctrinal errors" and with "emphasis and elaboration" in "those areas of Scripture that are the basis of distinctive Adventist belief."

It was not to crystallize once and for all a dogmatic interpretation of the Bible, nor to "give sanctuary or support to the pet theories of any individual" or be "speculative." By avoiding technical theological jargon it was to be "at once learned and simple": "It isn't necessary to use ten dollar words in order to express ten dollar thoughts." It was to take full advantage of the insight into the meaning Hebrew

and Greek words provide, but without making a fetish of them. It was to be written for ministers, Bible instructors, Sabbath school teachers, local elders, missionary-minded lay persons and those who "have a special love for the Bible and who wish to study it with greater thoroughness."

The most often expressed criticism of the

*Commentary* has been Nichol's listing of all authors without specifying what each wrote.

The instructions contained an extended section on the "Anonymity of Writers" in which Nichol explained the reasons for this intentional omission. He felt that since the manuscripts required fairly extensive revision to achieve the uniform style necessary for a Seventh-day Adventist Bible commentary, they could not be used as vehicles for personal opinions. To protect individual writers from criticism, even on points where the writers and editors might agree, the editors assumed full responsibility for content, although names of the 37 contributors of all seven volumes appear in each volume.

Thirty years later these fears no longer seem justified. The accompanying list of authors should be read with the reservation in mind that opinions expressed in the *Commentary* reflect the consensus of the editors and not necessarily always the opinions or the original writers.

### The Editorial Process

The manuscripts varied considerably in quality, and thus in the time required to process them for typesetting. Some, such as those by Siegfried Horn and Graham Maxwell, required little or no editing. Others had to be revised or completely rewritten. In some instances the manuscript consisted essentially of the teacher's classroom notes—excellent for use in lectures but impossible as commentary material. In several cases, submis-

*The Commentary chose the humble role of student listening intently in order to hear what the Bible has to say. Its objective was not to get in the last word on every point of interpretation but to encourage and assist readers in reaching their own conclusions.*

sions consisted primary of generalities and homily, with little no exegesis. In some instances, excellent scholars simply proved to be poor writers.

It was the task of the associate editors to remedy these and numerous other defects and to unify the style. Elder Nichol then evaluated the work and made the final decision regarding what the *Commentary* would say, verse by verse.

What should the editors do when they discover that one of the contributors had had his secretary type Albert Barnes' commentary for an entire book of the Bible, word for word from beginning to end, and submitted this as his contribution to the *Commentary*? Nichol's solution was to say nothing, pay the stipulated fee, file the document in his circular file, and secure a pinch-hit writer. Understandably, the name of the former writer does not appear among the contributors.

What should the editors do when comment on a major book of the Bible is completely unusable? In this case, the writer was suffering the later stages of a terminal disease, yet his high sense of loyalty and responsibility led him to do his best to fulfill his contract. He was paid, of course, but the three editors who wrote what appears in the *Commentary* were unable to use any of his material. In this instance there was not time to secure another writer.

What should the editors do when a major manuscript is three years late and the time is fast approaching when it must be processed in order to keep the project on schedule? Nichol asked his associates to suggest a substitute writer who might be persuaded to fulfill the assignment—almost overnight. The long-delayed document came in the mail a day or two later and proved to be one of the best-written contributions to the *Commentary*.

Inasmuch as this was to be a Seventh-day Adventist Bible commentary, we considered it appropriate, always, to take note of historic Adventist interpretations of a passage. Where two or more interpretations have been held by a significant number of responsible persons within the church, it was our purpose to represent all of them fairly, but to favor an interpretation on which an informed consensus had crystallized. As editors, we did not consider it appropriate to use the *Commentary* as a vehicle in which to promote our personal opinions or those of anyone else. In instances where our collective judgment could not conscientiously support a particular traditionally held interpretation, we sought in an inoffensive way to present the evidence and give the reader an opportunity to make up his or her own mind. At times the expression "Seventh-day Adventists have taught that..." or its equivalent was our ironic way of expressing collective editorial judgment that the interpretation so characterized is not exegetically valid. Accurate exegesis was our primary concern.

A little more than halfway through, Nichol figured that the editorial process alone required 11,025 work-hours for each volume, or a total of 77,175 for all seven. For one person to do all of the writing and the editing, nearly 100 years would have been necessary. By enlisting the help of 37 writers, an editorial

team consisting of three full-time and six part-time editors, copy editors, and more than 100 non-editorial readers, Nichol was able to compress the work of a century into five or six years—with a high level of accuracy. In a letter to contributors in August 1955 he wrote:

It is becoming increasingly evident to us that the very nature of this work, which must make a cohesive whole of all that is written . . . demands a tremendous amount of work upon the original manuscripts. This is in no way a disparagement of the authors . . . . This heavy total of editorial hours explains, in part, why it is possible to bang out ponderous volumes at a rather rapid rate and still produce works of prime value.

But, for Elder Nichol, quality was even more important than time. The *Commentary* must be as nearly perfect in every respect as possible—biblically, theologically, factually, typographically, and stylistically. Accuracy and speed are not usually altogether compatible, but operate in inverse proportion to each other. Nichol demanded both. In order to provide the *Commentary* with both, he set up an elaborate system designed to ferret out every possible type of error or shortcoming before the presses began to turn. By the time manuscript copy was made into plates for printing, 22 pairs of eyes had read every word of every line in the endeavor to make the resulting product as perfect as humanly possible.

### Theological Booby Traps and Roadblocks

From the beginning to end the editorial process seemed to be loaded with booby traps of various kinds which, if carelessly handled, could have been the source of real problems for the editors. The very first words of the Bible—"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"—held us up at an editorial roadblock for three weeks, and Elder Nichol began to wonder out loud when, if ever, we would reach our destination of Revelation 22:20. Comment was written and rewritten, edited and re-edited, typeset and reset.

An entirely different exegetical ambush awaited us at Genesis 30:37 to 31:12, where Jacob informs Laban that God devised the procedure by which he had been able to acquire most of Laban's flocks and herds. As described, however, the strategy was based on two genetic impossibilities—prenatal influence of the kind here described and the transmission of acquired characteristics. The former qualifies as superstition, the latter as science fiction (see Genesis 30:37; cf. 31:4-12). Did God overrule the laws of genetics and let Jacob believe that the procedure produced the result he claimed for it, or was it a ploy Jacob invented to awe Laban into believing that God had directed him to perform? The result was clear, but it is obvious to us today that the conception of spotted and speckled cattle was not the result of the procedure to which Jacob attributed it. In addition to the genetic problems involved is the ethical question: Would



God deceive Jacob into thinking that the procedure produced the result, and would He connive with Jacob to the disadvantage of Laban as the Bible implies?

Another type of problem lurked in Leviticus 11. The identity of a third of the Hebrew names of animals listed as unclean is unknown today, and any attempt at identifying them with known animals is guesswork. How could we comment intelligently (see Leviticus 11:2)? Again, how was the *Commentary* to reconcile the instruction of Deuteronomy 14:22-26—about spending one's tithe for wine, strong drink and whatever a per-

in Old Testament Prophecy" (Vol. 4, pp. 25-38), which affirms that the predictive prophecies of the Old Testament were originally addressed to literal Israel under the covenant and were to have been fulfilled to them had they remained faithful to their covenant obligations and accepted the Messiah when he came.

Prior to editing the comment on Daniel, both Don and I thought of the book of Daniel as an exception to this otherwise universal rule, but editing the comment on Daniel convinced both of us—contrary to our previous opinion—that this principle applies to the book of Daniel as well. Elder Nichol's

overriding pastoral concern, however, led him to insert the parenthetical caveat on page 38 exempting "the book of Daniel that the Prophet was bidden to 'shut up' and 'seal' or to other passages whose application Inspiration may have limited exclusively to our time." This was one of only two or three occasions when Elder Nichol exercised his prerogative as editor-in-chief to override our editorial judgment.

Aware of the problems associated with the traditional interpretation of passages in Daniel and the Revelation, and of the experience of the church in attempting to deal with them, Don and I repeatedly spoke to each other of being, like Daniel, "astonished by the space of



The SDA Bible Commentary staff: Bernard Seton, Julia Neuffer, Donald Neufeld, Raymond Cottrell, Leona Running, and Herbert Douglas.

son might lust for—with the Bible admonition that the tithe is sacred and that intoxicating substances are evil?

The so-called "wisdom literature" presented a number of perplexing problems. The book of Ecclesiastes confronted us with the need to determine whether some statements should be considered as inspired or as a reflection of the writer's wayward, apostate years (see Vol. 3, p. 1060). Also, how did the amorous, erotic Song of Solomon get into the sacred canon? Is it historical or allegorical? Made into a motion picture it would earn an "X" rating, and if offered for sale on 42nd Street in New York City we would consider it pornographic (see Vol. 3, pp. 1110, 1111).

The Old Testament prophets are loaded with booby traps for the inexperienced and unwary. While we were editing Volume 4, I suggested to Elder Nichol that a discussion of principles for interpreting Old Testament predictive prophecy would be desirable. With his blessing, I wrote the article "The Role of Israel

half an hour" and, like Paul, of spending "a day and night in the deep."

But we did not think the *Commentary* was the right place to make an issue of matters not essential to salvation and our own pastoral concern led us to do the best we could with the traditional interpretation. Upon one occasion when certain questions were addressed to Elder Nichol in a public meeting, he replied that the *Commentary* would not deal with these matters, and he did not expect to be around when the church was ready to tackle them.

The synoptic problem—the literary relationship of Matthew, Mark and Luke—has never been resolved to everyone's complete satisfaction. If modern literary documents made use of each other as the synoptic Gospels do, we would consider it a clear case of gross plagiarism and a valid basis for indicting two of them as infringements of copyright. Ninety percent of Mark is reproduced in Matthew and Luke, often word for



word, and both Matthew and Luke make extensive use of still another, unknown source. A more practical aspect of the problem was whether to comment at length on the same incident wherever it occurs in all three, or in only one of them, and if so which one (see Vol 5, p. 194)?

It is not possible to determine the precise sequence of events in the ministry of Jesus. What principles should we follow in constructing a harmony of the Gospels, which inevitably involves arranging the events of Christ's life on earth in particular sequence? Furthermore, there is no clear evidence in the Gospels to indicate the length of Christ's ministry; commentators vary all the way from three and

a half years to one year (see Vol. 5, pp. 190-201). Despite all statements to the contrary, there is no unambiguous evidence for the date of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, nor has anyone been able to harmonize the information the four Gospels provide as to when the Last Supper took place. Lurking in the background of this dilemma is the fact that the date of the crucifixion is the anchor point that led to selection of 457 B.C. as the beginning date for 2300 days of Daniel 8:14, yet any suggested date for the crucifixion is arbitrary guesswork (see Vol. 3, pp. 247-266).

Often Don and I would spend an hour or two, or sometimes—on an important point—a day or more, exploring the problem together in order to arrive at a considered decision as to what the *Commentary* should say on a particular passage of Scripture. Upon one occasion we proposed to Elder Nichol that a weekend retreat for the *Commentary* editors should be devoted to the subject of prophetic fulfillment, the relation of Old Testament prophecy to the New Testament, the “little apocalypse” of Matthew 24 (including “this generation”), and the imminence of the *parousia* (“presence” or “coming”) of Christ clearly expressed throughout the New Testament. Meeting at the large Milesburn cabin beside the Appalachian Trail in Mischeaux Forest about 30 miles west of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, we devoted several hours to a discussion of the various issues and found our way through to the position to be taken on these matters.

Aware of the periodic theological hurricanes that brew in Australia and eventually reach North America, I suggested to Elder Nichol that we might do well to give our Australian brethren an opportunity to read galleys on the book of Hebrews. I suspected that some of them would take vigorous exception to some of the comments we as editors had already agreed on, and that it would be preferable to obtain their responses before publication rather than after. He agreed, and a few days later we met with some of the Australian leaders who

were in Washington for meetings.

Members of the editorial team were familiar with the principles of textual criticism, as it is called, and in writing and editing the New Testament commentaries we examined several thousand variant readings and selected those we considered deserving of attention. Periodically we would confer in the capacity of a textual criticism seminar and reach a consensus on the weight to be given each variant to be mentioned in the

*Commentary*. (See Vol. 3, pp. 146, 147, for an explanation of the system we devised for expressing the weight of evidence for a particular reading. Interestingly, the system later

*If modern literary documents made use of each other as the synoptic Gospels do, we would consider it a clear case of gross plagiarism and a valid basis for indicting two of them as infringements of copyright.*

adopted by the editors of the Bible Society Greek New Testament was very similar to ours. See their introduction, pp. x and xi.)

What should an editor do with “proof texts” that inherently do not prove what is traditionally attributed to them—as, for example, Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6; Revelation 12:17 and 19:10; Daniel 12:4; Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:1, 2; and most of the texts usually cited with respect to “the law”? In most of these and a number of other passages, pastoral concern led us to conclude that the *Commentary* was not the place to make an issue of the Bible versus the traditional interpretation, much as this disappointed us as Bible scholars and would be a disappointment to our scholarly friends who know better.

### Ellen G. White and the Bible

One of Elder Nichol's basic requirements was that the *Commentary* should at no point express any concept that could be construed as a contradiction of the writings of Ellen White. We were, of course, familiar with her published works, but nevertheless kept one editorial eye fixed on the Conflict of the Ages series, which parallels the Bible account. In addition, we asked various readers of galleys and foundry proofs to call our attention to any items we as editors might have missed.

First and foremost we were to be faithful to the Bible, but in so doing we could avoid comment that might appear to contradict comment by Ellen White. Generally speaking, references to her writings in the body of the comment are inserted, not as authority for the statements made, but in confirmation or for comparison.

It was not long before we discovered that Ellen G. White sometimes construes a passage to mean something different from what the original context requires; we also discovered why she does so. When dealing with a passage in its historical



context—as throughout the Conflict series—she consistently deals with it contextually and her comment comports with the Bible. But when her primary objective is homiletical application of a passage to our time, she often quotes the Bible out of context, applying the principle involved but in a way that seems to contradict the Bible. In such instances she uses the Bible to illustrate her point, not to exegete the Bible. New Testament writers often quote the Old Testament in the same way. Exegetical and homiletical uses of Scripture are both legitimate, but it is a gross misuse of Scripture to construe their—or her homily as exegesis.

***It was not long before we discovered that Ellen White sometimes uses a passage to mean something different from what the original context requires; we also discovered why she does so.***

Climaxing his courtship with the *Commentary* for more than seven years, J.D. Snider insisted that Volume 7, and thus the

A prime illustration of Ellen White's homiletical use of Scripture is her comment on "the law" in the 'book of Galatians. In Acts of the Apostles, where she deals with the historical situation in Galatia she consistently identifies "the law" as the Decalogue—homily. In effect she is saying that we can no more be saved today by keeping the law than the Galatian believers could be saved by observing the ceremonial law; now, as then, salvation is by faith alone.

Something the same is true of Ellen White's application of Old Testament predictions that originally applied to Israel of old, and to the closing events of earth's history. According to Nahum 1:9 for instance, affliction would not arise again from Assyria. Ellen White applies the statement to the ultimate end of all evil in a universal sense (as in *The Great Controversy*, pp. 483, 612; and Exodus 12:37 cf. Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 334). Sometimes she bases her comment on an inaccurate translation of an English word (as in 2 Thessalonians 2:9 cf. *Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 686).

### **An Exhaustive Climax to an Exhaustive Project**

The exhaustive index to the seven volumes of the *Bible Commentary* (Vol. 7, pp. 1022-1167) was the last of our 12 Herculean labors. None of us had any formal training or experience in compiling an index of these proportions but, realizing the need for a good index and the fact that the compilation of one requires special expertise, Nichol sent Julia Neuffer, assistant editor of the *Commentary* and research specialist, for a course in indexing at nearby Catholic University of America. She thus became our authority for index content, style and clarity, as she had been our authority on so many other things essential to the project. Her favorite illustration of poor indexing was a series of "see" references which sent the hapless reader on a wild goose chase that eventually led him back to the original entry without locating the information he sought: (1) Wild goose chase. See Chase, wild goose. (2) Chase, wild goose. See Goose chase, wild. (3) Goose chase, wild. See Wild goose chase.

As I read page proofs for the seven volumes, I had been blue-penciling items to be indexed. Each entry was typed on a separate three-by-five card, and all of the cards were classified and alphabetized. Eventually our *Commentary* office was cluttered with boxes containing thousands upon thousands of cards. Inasmuch as the index had to include Volume 7 itself, in which it was to appear, final preparation of the index could not begin until we had read the last proof and filed the last entry card.

complete *Commentary* set, be ready for the 1957 Christmas trade, and when page proofs for Volume 7 were finally in hand, read and indexed, the seven furies took control of the *Commentary* office and pandemonium prevailed. Fourteen of us (editors, copy editors and proofreaders) literally worked around the clock shift by shift, day after day, for ten days to complete the process of transforming the thousands of card entries into the index as it appears in Volume 7. Work halted about ten minutes before sundown Friday night and began again ten minutes after sundown Saturday night. By the close of those ten days we had produced an exhaustive index, and we ourselves were exhausted.

### **Why Did It Succeed?**

The ultimate measure of the *Commentary's* success is the extent to which it illumines the Bible for those who aspire to a better understanding of Scripture. This cannot be measured directly, of course, but there are a number of indirect means including, chiefly, the response of the church in purchasing it and how often it is quoted in other church publications such as the Sabbath School Lesson Quarterly.

From the publisher's point of view the best estimate of success is the sales report. It was originally hoped that 5,000 sets could be sold within three years of the time the last volume was off the press, and with that in view the original printing order for Volume 1 was 5,160. But even before Volume 7 was ready 23,000 sets had been purchased at the prepublication price of \$55.65 for the seven volumes. By the close of 1984 more than 83,000 complete sets had been sold, the current price being \$147.50. Were J.D. Snider alive he would have good reason to be jubilant.

Although the *Commentary* was not intended for reading like an ordinary book, a surprising number of people have told me of reading every word of it from beginning to end!

One of Elder Nichol's important goals was to make the *Commentary* acceptable to the church. Thirty years without com-



plaint about its consensus understanding of the Bible is strong evidence that the church feels comfortable with the *Commentary*. This is not to suggest that everyone agrees with it at every point or that the *Commentary* is without flaw; even the editors did not personally approve of every concept it expresses. It does mean, however, that the church accepts it and identifies with it. The fact that the *Commentary* respects differences of opinion is doubtless an important factor in its acceptance. That Adventist Bible scholars, who realize that the traditional Adventist understanding of the Bible has not always been strictly biblical, also feel reasonably comfortable with the *Commentary* and find it useful, is another measure of its success. Six key factors were responsible for this success:

***During the 1950s and 1960s the open theological climate in the church was favorable to the honest way in which the Commentary editors, in their dedication first to the Bible and then to the church sought to deal with the Bible and with the teachings of the church in relation to the Bible.***

1. J.D. Snider's vision—his awareness of the need for an Adventist Bible commentary, together with his belief that the church was ready for it, that Adventist Bible scholars could and would write it, and that the Review and Herald could publish and market it at a price sufficient to cover the cost of production. "J.D." was the only person at the time who had that vision and was in a position to implement it, and his vision proved to be correct at every point.

2. F.D. Nichol's editorial expertise. He was probably one of a very few persons in the church at the time who combined all of the qualities essential to planning and executing the project: editorial experience, a concept of what the *Commentary* should be, sensitive awareness of the thinking and the mood of the church and its leaders, open-mindedness and willingness to respect points of view with which he differed, appreciation of scholarship and a penetrating analysis of other people's reasoning, the high esteem in which he was held by the entire church, including its leaders and the contributors, an almost fanatical penchant for accuracy, and a passionate drive to carry the project through to completion within a relatively brief period of time.

3. The willingness of the publisher to venture a quarter of a million dollars, which eventually became half a million "initial expense" (the cost before the presses begin to turn), and the dedication of Review and Herald personnel to the project.

4. The content—the labors of the contributors and the editors to make the *Commentary* faithful to the Bible and to the Adventist understanding of Scripture.

5. The dedication of the church at large to the Bible and the value its members place on a better understanding of it.

6. The openness of the church at the time the *Commentary* was written and published. During the 1950s and 1960s the theological climate in the church was favorable to the honest way in which the *Commentary* editors, in their dedication first to the Bible and then to the church, sought to deal with the Bible and with the teachings of the church in relation to the Bible.

The *Commentary* was strictly a publishing house project with the blessing of the General Conference. The Review and Herald Publishing

Association accepted both financial and theological responsibility. In other words, the project was unofficial with credit for success or blame for failure going to the publisher and not to the General Conference. This arrangement protected the General Conference from criticism in case

the *Commentary* posed either a financial or theological problem. Had the project been sponsored and controlled by the General Conference, the *Commentary* would inevitably have taken a dogmatic, apologetic position on points of exegesis and interpretation where differences of opinion existed; this would have alienated the respect of many and limited the *Commentary's* value and usefulness. Without training and expertise in biblical and theological matters, administrators would have found themselves in the embarrassing position of having to make decisions they were not competent to make. The fact that the publisher, with its Bible scholar editors, made these decisions and accepted responsibility for them protected the General Conference in case errors of judgment were made, errors for which it could then disavow responsibility.

## Long-term Influence

Though not by design on the part of those who convened it, the 1952 Bible Conference opened the door to a 15-year climate of openness and freedom to study the Bible objectively rather than apologetically, during which the church made rapid progress in its understanding of the Scripture. Elder Nichol often commented that except for the 1952 Bible Conference it would not have been possible to produce the *Commentary* because the editors could not have operated with sufficient freedom to make it objective and therefore worthwhile. In turn, the *Commentary* consolidated the openness and freedom that began in 1952 and continued for several years.

As a result of this climate of openness and freedom it was possible to build into the *Commentary* advanced principles of Bible study that set the *Commentary* free from the outmoded proof-text method of study. These advanced principles make the Scripture in the original languages, the ancient manuscripts,



the context in which a statement occurs, and the historical setting normative for its meaning. The purpose of this method of study is to ascertain what the inspired writers, guided by the Holy Spirit, intended their words to mean, and thus to give the Bible an opportunity to interpret itself. It avoids the common proof-text method of reading into the Bible whatever the would-be interpreter may imagine it means.

Inevitably, the editors found that certain passages of Scripture, taken in context, do not support the traditional proof-text concepts usually attributed to them. As editors we would have been unfaithful to the Bible if we had not set forth what we

conscientiously believed to be the true meaning of a passage. At the same time, with the appropriate pastoral concern, we included the traditional interpretation, and were thus able in most instances to be faithful to the Bible and at the same time recognize a historic Adventist position. By offering more than one interpretation of a passage we made clear to *Commentary* readers that we were not freezing Adventist theology into a creed, despite fears in some quarters that we would attempt to do so. We realized also that some church members, used to the dogmatic proof-text approach, would feel uncomfortable and threatened by the openness of the *Commentary*, but we believed that in time the church would come to appreciate the virtues of openness and that our endeavor to be faithful to the text of Scripture would have a corrective effect.

Publication of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* was an epochal event in the history of the church, one whose full import is yet to be perceived. With the clearer and more complete understanding of the Bible reflected in the *Commentary* as a basis together with continuing study of the Bible by sound principles, competent Adventist Bible scholars of a future generation will be able to improve on what we were able to do.

*Editors' note:* Significant revisions of a few general articles in the first edition of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* were completed in 1976. Begun by Ray Cottrell, the revisions were completed under Ray Woolsey's supervision. Geoscience Research Institute staff—pri-

marily Ariel Roth—revised the articles in Volume 1 on Creation and the flood. (See W. W. Hughes' "Shifts in Adventist Creationism," in *Spectrum*, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 47-50.) The section on "lower criticism" concerned with the editing of biblical manuscripts, was rewritten for



*Nichol and Cottrell confer regarding the SDA Bible Commentary*

the article on "Lower and Higher Criticism" in Volume 5. Historical maps in Volume 7 were revised when Rand McNally acknowledged errors unnoticed for decades in their depiction of places in Egypt and the Niger Desert. Rand McNally thanked Julia Neuffer, assistant editor of the first edition, for bringing the needed corrections to their attention. Throughout the seven volumes, metric measurements were added to English measurements, and, where necessary, values of coins were compared to wages of their day instead of to the fluctuating value of the dollar.

# The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Latin America and the Caribbean

**Delmer G. Ross**

Greenleaf, Floyd. *A History of the Inter-American and South American Divisions*. 1: *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*. 2: *Bear the News to Every Land*. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews UP 1992. Notes. Bibliography. Index. 1: iv, 470 pp. 2: ii, 542 pp.

Attempting to detail and analyze the growth of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Latin America and the Caribbean from its earliest beginnings in the mid-1880s to 1980 must have been a daunting task. In slightly less than a century the church there grew from no adherents at all to more than one million members. By 1980 approximately one-third of the world's Seventh-day Adventists lived in the Inter-American and South American divisions. In fact, the Inter-American Division was the church's largest.

Complicating the assignment was the fact that there were no scholarly general studies available. Up until now, most of the published work has consisted of mission stories stressing the unique, the colorful, and the miraculous. A few more serious authors have written attempts to prove the church's ecclesiastical legitimacy by postulating that Adventism in the region goes much further back than it really does by stressing the ideas of late eighteenth-century Catholic thinkers such as Manuel Lacunza and Manuel Belgrano. Such publications undoubtedly have their place, but they should never be confused with history. Given the paucity of reliable published material, Floyd Greenleaf, a Latin American history specialist who taught at Southern Adventist University for more than twenty years, should be commended for even trying to produce a serious general history; that he succeeds is truly praiseworthy.

Employing a topical-within-chronological approach, Greenleaf divides the

work into two fairly equal sections. Volume 1, subtitled *Let the Earth Hear His Voice*, deals with the early years, from the 1880s to the early 1930s. Volume 2, *Bear the News to Every Land*, details the prodigious growth of the church from the 1920s to 1980. Both segments are based largely on primary sources available in church archives.

The first volume begins with a chapter giving a useful political perspective. It then details the rather haphazard nature of early church growth, which was brought about largely by itinerant colporteurs and evangelists. Often enough, the results of

their efforts were a significant number of baptisms, but the overall increase in membership remained low because the apostasy rate was appallingly high. Large congregations of believers could be raised by traveling workers, but their survival without permanent pastoral care was questionable. Over the years, as the church became better organized, such care became possible. The number of ordained ministers, however, has always remained insufficient.

Greenleaf writes also about the cost of building the church. While money was important, he notes that the most significant prices for overseas missions were paid in toil, tears,





health, and even the lives of the workers themselves. The toll was staggering. Death was too common, and too commonly it came suddenly (1: 212).

Other topics covered in Volume I include Indian missions, the disruptions and changes brought about by World War I, and the effects of the Great Depression. Although the growth of the church was fairly steady through the 1930s, it was not spectacular.

Major topics covered in Volume 2 include institutions such as hospitals and medical launches, publishing houses, educational facilities, food factories, and changes in evangelistic methods. Greenleaf credits much of the almost explosive growth of the church since the 1940s to lay evangelism. He deals with government relations and the church's "new humanitarianism," its present attempt to include long-term community development with its more traditional catastrophic relief programs. Throughout, the author details how foreign missionaries have been slowly but surely replaced with national workers, resulting in most cases in vigorous national Seventh-day Adventist churches. He acknowledges the existence of problems, too, from schism and legal limitations and demands to unfettered currency inflation and outright warfare.

One of the questions I had when I was asked to review Greenleaf's work was just how he could cram the tremendous volume of factual material, plus analysis, into slightly more than one thousand pages of text. Using my personal knowledge of my parents' thirteen years of mission service in three countries of the Inter-American Division as a guide, I investigated. Their pioneering efforts among the Indians of Guatemala is handled in some detail (2:439-40). Despite the fact that my father was president of the Nicaragua Mission, their assistance in Nicaragua is not mentioned, although two of the major events of their service there are: the relocation of the hospital (2:460-61) and placing in service a mission launch (2:466). Their work in Honduras is mentioned not at all. I show this, not to detract from Greenleaf's study, but to illustrate how he condenses, which is necessarily a major part of his task. Reasonably

enough, he gives more space to pioneer work and that which is different or even unique than he does to day-to-day operations. I believe he has acquitted himself very well in this area.

Although generally well researched and written, Greenleaf's study is not without its flaws. The index, for example, is of limited usefulness. Of the events mentioned in the previous paragraph, only the first dealing with the Indian work in Guatemala can be located easily by using the index. The relocation of the hospital can be found through the index providing the searcher has certain prior knowledge. The remainder is not mentioned.

The work contains the usual quota of minor errors such as the often tourist-inspired misspelling of Quezaltenango (2:177) or the more phonetic than accurate spelling of "Huichol" (2:432) that can mar any book. One such error, "Adventists . . . were . . . beating the sick," (2:i) even provides a bit of humor.

A more serious problem, though, is the consistent failure to use diacritical marks such as accents, tildes, and cedillas, resulting in the misspelling of many non-English proper names and other words. Referring to early denominational printing-press problems, Greenleaf explains, "Without these markings words could change meaning and sentences lose their coherence." (1: 70) Whether the author or the publisher is responsible for their omission in this work matters little; the failure to use them is distracting to the knowledgeable reader and possibly misleading to others.

A fine piece of pioneer investigation, *The Seventh-day Adventist Church in Latin America and the Caribbean* will appeal mainly to scholars. One might hope that it will stimulate similar studies of other regions. Certainly it will become the point of departure for many narrower works, scholarly and otherwise, dealing with the church in Latin America and the Caribbean. Greenleaf is to be commended for a work well done.

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### *Midnight Cry*, continued from page 25

Millerite faces, Josiah Litch is never identified, nor are the pictures of what I assume are early nineteenth century literati or perhaps Transcendentalists. Finally, Ellen White's visions did not, in fact, "continue to the end of her life"; instead, she experienced more night-time dreams than visions past middle age.

The dozens of individuals involved in the production of *The Midnight Cry* deserve commendations for a well-researched,

fast-paced, visual feast. Students will appreciate the subtitles as an outline showing the progression of Millerism from 1816 to 1845. Photography buffs will be thrilled at the aesthetic care devoted to framed shots, wide angle and zoom focus, and the stunning use of back country roads and autumn vistas. Despite its omissions, *The Midnight Cry* is still the best cinematic interpretation of the Millerite experience. For a more complete understanding in print, viewers would be well advised to read George Knight's recent *Millennial Fever and the End of the World* (1993).

# Adventist Faith on the Northwest Frontier

**Carlos A. Schwantes**

Johnson, Doug R. *Adventism on the Northwestern Frontier*. Berrien Springs, MI: Oronoko 1996.

This book chronicles the difficulties that pioneer Seventh-day Adventists faced when they established and first spread their faith in the Pacific Northwest. It is a story of sometimes halting progress, of one step back for every two steps forward, or sometimes even of temporarily losing ground. Yet by the end of the 1890s, Seventh-day Adventists had managed to lay a solid foundation upon which to build a large edifice. As one reviews the struggles of the 1870s and 1880s, it is simply amazing to think that Adventists in the Twentieth Century came to flourish in the Pacific Northwest as perhaps no where else in North America. At various times in the recent past, one or another of the conferences comprising the North Pacific Union has recorded the highest per capita membership of Seventh-day Adventists in the entire United States and Canada. Certainly there was nothing in those early years to suggest this would ever be so.

Many of the troubles early Adventists encountered in frontier Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana were self-inflicted. Perhaps frontier regions of the United States acted as magnets that attracted people of strong personality and independent spirit. Certainly early Seventh-day Adventists in the Northwest would tend to fit this description. The result was that debilitating conflicts within the infant denomination were perhaps inevitable. The important thing is not that Adventist pioneers had differences of opinion: some did leave the church, but others persisted and ultimately overcame their differences.

In this fascinating story, remarkable personalities receive the attention they deserve. First is Augusta Moorhouse, who was converted by two Adventist preachers, Merritt E. Cornell and Moses Hull, at a tent meeting in Knoxville Iowa, in 1859. Two years later she and her husband, who cared little for his wife's new faith, headed west to the fertile Walla Walla Valley. Among the couple's sons, Lee Moorhouse, achieved fame as a pioneer photographer of the Northwest frontier, one of his images still hangs in the Smithsonian Institution. Augusta, however, remained the sole Adventist in her family and perhaps in the entire Pacific Northwest. Not until the end of the 1860s would she encounter another member of her faith. Until then Augusta's only tangible link to fellow believers in more settled parts

of the United States was the *Review and Herald*, the church's official journal.

Adding to Augusta Moorhouse's "congregation" of one was the arrival of a handful of Seventh-day Adventist families from California. To put the slow church growth in the Northwest in perspective, it is worth remembering that even in the Golden State in 1868, only about fifty Seventh-day Adventists dwelled in the midst of a population of nearly half a million people and that the entire denomination itself numbered only about seven thousand members. The first Seventh-day Adventist church in Walla Walla and the Pacific Northwest dates from 1873, but even then the tiny congregation was located nearly a thousand miles from the nearest church of fellow believers.

Walla Walla, which recorded about two thousand residents in 1873 and ranked ahead of Seattle as the largest town in Washington Territory, deserves the title of "cradle of Adventism" for the inland Northwest. It was from Walla Walla that itinerant Preachers and evangelists traveled to outlying communities such as Milton, Weston, Pendleton, Waitsburg and Dayton to hold meetings, and in some of these places tiny Seventh-day Adventist fellowships soon formed.

Walla Walla also had a large army base nearby, Fort Walla Walla, that gave the town a more cosmopolitan atmosphere than its geographical isolation might otherwise suggest. Among the soldiers won to the new faith was Alonzo T. Jones in 1873, who became a tireless worker for the church. It was Jones who along with Isaac Van Horn traveled by steamboat down the Columbia River in the Centennial Year of 1876 to hold a series of evangelistic meetings in Oregon's Willamette Valley. In Salem the following year they organized the first Seventh-day Adventist church in the Willamette Valley, a congregation of eleven members.

And so the church moved slowly forward, but not without an occasional set back. In 1881 for example the treasurer of the North Pacific Conference stole a third of its annual income. Doug R. Johnson, a Seventh-day Adventist pastor in the Pacific Northwest, does not shy away from these less edifying details of Adventist history, but his honest accounting of the past coupled with a prodigious amount of research is what

See *Northwest*, page 46



# Seventy-five Years of Education at La Sierra

**Frederick G. Hoyt**

When La Sierra Academy was founded in the summer of 1922, not even the wildest visionary would have predicted that in less than 75 years it would be a fully accredited university offering a variety of degrees up to doctorates to a large cosmopolitan student body. Certainly there was nothing inherent in the fabled watermelon patch where construction began that would have indicated such a future. So it would seem reasonable to look back from our privileged vantage point in 1997 and ask a fundamental question:

*Why has La Sierra survived for seventy-five years?*

Adequate answers must keep in mind that during those years there were people and institutions that sincerely wanted La Sierra

to fail, or at least to succeed in only limited ways. And at least on two occasions that are painful to recall La Sierra came perilously close to being an academic obituary item.

So why is it still alive, and rather vibrantly so? I will suggest some tentative answers and conclude with the best answer I have reached.

## Physical Environment

Surely the Founding Fathers were impressed with the climate, the soil, and the water they found on Rancho La Sierra. And the view across the valley with its orange groves and alfalfa fields and snow capped mountain ranges should have closed the deal. Public Relations from the opening of school in 1922 until now have tempted students from afar with this panorama. We will of course say nothing of Santa Anna devil winds, floods, brush fires, heat waves, freezes, and smudges (out of which the ingenuity of civilized man quickly created SMOG). (An aside on smudging is needed: some male students desperately desired smudging as filling and lighting the smudge pots required long hours of cash employment in area citrus groves.)

The intent of the Founding Fathers was to locate this school in a rural environment, which La Sierra certainly was in 1922, because agriculture was the ABC of true education. This deliberate isolation was heightened by the lack of public transportation. Students had no cars either because of poverty or school restrictions and many of the faculty were also pedestrians.

The only student I can recall who had a car was a very old fellow (at least 25!) who had a pick-up truck to use on his local milk route (in glass bottles, if some of you can recall this medieval practice). It should be noted that Jim Acheson demonstrated the true La Sierra spirit by making it through dental school despite his late educational start in life.

On one memorable occasion Claude Steen, Jr., was permitted to bring the family Lincoln Zephyr to campus. It was a wonder to behold and the few who got a ride declared it a truly marvelous experience.

But can we prove that a single student ever came for the location and the environment?

Then there are the many impressive buildings around campus that grew up since 1922. And some that have disappeared and gone to wherever used up or unneeded buildings go when ex cathedra decrees have so ordered.

## Physical Plant

The first two buildings to be erected were the essential dormitories, Gladwyn Hall for the women and South Hall for the men (soon to be denominated Mu Beta Kappa, not for a Greek Letter fraternity but pleasingly for Men of Brotherly Kindness). Then there arose between them the heart of the campus, the Administration Building, which inevitably came to be known as La Sierra Hall. It soon contained everything else that a viable educational institution needed: kitchen, bakery, and dining



*La Sierra Hall in 1929*

room in the basement; offices on the first floor (Registrar, President, Business); chapel (where church and sabbath school also met); a student body office (now the copy room); and classrooms; the top floor housed the small library (where the Modern Language lab is now) and other classrooms. I cannot recall any teachers' offices; where they worked is a mystery.

An impossible teaching situation was resolved in 1932 when the Science Hall (San Fernando Hall) went up. For many years it was to house all chemistry, physics, biology, and mathematics classes, labs, and museums. Here there were a few small offices for teachers.

When I first saw La Sierra in the summer of 1935 dirt was literally flying for the erection of what came to be called the Camp Meeting Pavilion, or rather soon College Hall. The next



*Hole Memorial Auditorium served as the location for chapel for many years as well as the location for the La Sierra Church for several years.*

Bulletin of Southern California Junior College (SCJC) proudly proclaimed it to be the "Center of Recreational Activities of the College." That phrase conjures up a vast collection of pictures which must be resolutely rejected in the interest of time.

By the next summer work began on HMA, Hole Memorial Auditorium, which made two essential moves possible: the music department on the top floor (I can't remember where it was before) and the academy offices and classes on the ground floor.

These two buildings went up under the administration of President E.E. Cossentine. He obviously earned the name of The Great Builder.

It occurs to me that the entire history of La Sierra might be condensed into the history of La Sierra Hall. The seemingly endless moving, modifying, repairing and reconstructing of that venerable shell (but still not handicap accessible) would make a moving narrative. It might be instructive, and perhaps dismaying, to have a dollar bottom line on all of this work and a comparison with what a new building would have cost. But as a stu-

dent and later a teacher in this landmark I cherish many memories related to it—especially the cheap thrills of riding out earthquakes on the top floor. Before becoming too critical of the construction of this and other early buildings it should be remembered that they were built largely with volunteer labor and when money was extremely limited.

We might appropriately have a brief memorial service for all of the buildings that have been demolished, or burned down, or had their functions changed. Those that were demolished in the sacred name of progress would include the old shops, the print shop, the fire station, the overflow women's barracks behind Gladwyn, two official presidential residences (one to make way for the present School of Business building and the other for the library), and the former business manager's house which was next to what is now Health Service. Why it disappeared is not clear; perhaps because of its small size which made it an embarrassment to later sensitive business managers who refused to live there.

The destruction of the old farm buildings represents a particularly poignant event.

The new dairy facility still sits atop the hill nearby as a reminder of a major decision to go out of the farming business and turn to other activities on these fertile acres which are as yet not clear. The demolition of the two old silos removed a memorial to two pre-med students from Glendale whose rented airplane crashed fatally into them as their horrified girl friends watched from campus.

The only buildings burned were the old Normal building (thoroughly destroyed under mysterious circumstances; rumors of arson by a disgruntled student were never publicly discussed) and the poultry plant (clearly the work of professional chicken thieves). Since the Normal building housed classrooms for teacher training and for the grade school this necessitated a new facility built at the present location.

Buildings whose functions have changed would include Industrial Arts (to Mathematics and Computing), Home Economics (to Business and Management), the Soup Stone (perhaps to Alumni Affairs), Calkins Hall (to various offices), the new Agriculture building (to child care and now in limbo), and the laundry (to custodial and the campus post office; the La Sierra post office, of course, was built on land leased to the famed Davenport financial empire). The massive Loma Linda Foods building perhaps should also be on this depressing list. Closed many years ago, it once supplied regular employment to hundreds of La Sierra students who produced the famed Rus-kets.

Can a pattern be discerned in the history of these buildings? Clearly agriculture lost its privileged ABC position; women no longer felt a predominating pull from home economics as the siren call of the professions grew steadily louder; and training in the manual arts and trades similarly weakened for the men. Over, above, beyond, and between all of this the computer silently performed its devastating revolution on campus as else-



where.

What will the next 25 years bring to La Sierra? Will classrooms largely disappear to make way for cyberspace education? Will live—sometimes even lively—professors be replaced by CD-ROMs and Videos? I am all for technological progress; but I shudder for future La Sierra students if the likes of Drs. Wilfred J. Airey and George Simpson are compressed onto a Video.

It would be difficult to determine just how many students were really attracted to La Sierra because of the buildings, as essential as these were. So we move on to other parts of the school.

## The Curriculum

In 1923 La Sierra became a fourteen-grade Normal Training School for preparing elementary teachers. And in 1927 it was moved up to a full Junior College. It was Southern California Junior College (SCJC) when I first viewed it in June 1935. The Bulletin that I first came under stipulated the academy college preparatory courses with very little flexibility and few electives. If you looked ahead to the college level classes (all in the same Bulletin) you would discover with awe that Ministerial, Teaching, Music, Secretarial, and Business could all be completed in two school years. Pre-Medical, -Dental, and -Dietetics also required two years while future nurses only needed to be on campus for a single year.

But La Sierra's academic offerings would not appear to have been so superior of themselves that they would have attracted many students to campus.

At first all of the academy and varied college level students were rather indiscriminately mixed together in La Sierra Hall and San Fernando Hall. I recall that the lower levels of students usually demonstrated proper deference to their college superiors but there was considerable grumbling by the academy boys that the college men had an unfair advantage in campus social life, what little "social life" that existed.

## Social Life

Social activities during the early days of La Sierra would have been difficult to locate and even more difficult to categorize relative to present day standards. There was little interaction of the sexes on campus; getting to see a girl at the dorm was a formidable undertaking requiring persistence and great strength of character by the fellows.

Any wayward thoughts of dalliance in the dining room for a fleeting chance to converse with your girl friend were thwarted by supervisors who carefully controlled seating at the tables. And admission was by those two entrances that yet remain which were gender specific, in current jargon. Supervisors there also carefully controlled dress standards to maintain strict campus standards of decency. Fellows, for example, had to wear coat and tie in order to join such a key social affair as eating togeth-

er with other civilized students.

Although there was a standing committee labeled "entertainment" it clearly was not one of the more heavily worked of the six regular campus committees. There were occasional Saturday evening entertainments, perhaps a travel picture in the chapel. When College Hall opened a new day had arrived at La Sierra—organized marching and skating under the leadership of resident musician Harlyn Abel, a phenomenal skater himself. The increasing complexities of the marches and skates became quite impressive, especially the evening's climax with a gigantic crack the whip. There was an early crisis caused by the great cloud of concrete dust raised by the steel skate wheels; this health hazard was quickly met in part by a requirement that all skates have fiber wheels.

There were no physical education classes (PE) and no organized athletics on campus. A pick-up baseball and volley ball game would appear at the annual school picnic but never on campus. There was a primitive tennis court with uneven surface



*A pond once existed in front of La Sierra Hall*

and a formidable steel wire net on which you played at your own risk. It was anonymously credited to Keld J. Reynolds's initiative, the only faculty member ever detected playing on it (properly dressed in white flannel). Some daring boys would risk tossing a forbidden football on the lawn in front of La Sierra Hall, but only after checking to be sure that the President was absent from campus (as he often was).

Perhaps the most popular form of exercise was Sabbath afternoon walks across the valley past Averill's country store and service station, to the Hole Mansion, or to the top of Two Bits mountain behind the school. Seeing the view from this eminence was not without some risks, from bumps and bruises to rattlesnake bites. President Cossentine's son spent several days in the County Hospital after an encounter with one of these reptiles.

There was a student association which spasmodically published a paper, the *College Criterion*. I can't recall names of officers but the Big Men on Campus in my limited world were certainly Percy Miles and Harry Schrillo. Through some strange

psychological repression I have no recollection of any comparable women that first year.

The annual student association banquet was a formidable affair held in the basement of LSH which prompted great ethical concern among the faculty for the girls who didn't get "asked" and the fellows who lacked the courage to "ask." Bribery seems not to have been considered. No satisfactory solution was ever achieved. This function seemed to be a critical event in the financial well being of nearby Baker's Flower Shop and some of their campus representatives.

If all of this doesn't seem like much social activity it really was kept to a bare minimum. With heavy study loads and excessive work schedules the great majority of students had little time or money for any more diversion. Then there were required morning and evening dorm worship, campus chapels several times a week, Friday evening meetings, Sabbath School and church.

Thus it would seem obvious that few students were attracted to La Sierra because of its sparkling social whirl.

## Work

The vast majority of students carried heavy work loads in addition to their studies. Some of them, it must be admitted, were clearly excessive, such as those who worked in the dairy, a round-the-clock operation dominated by demanding bovines. Students provided most of the labor for the big farm operation—field crops, dairy, poultry, garden, orchard—but also for a variety of demands on campus—laundry, kitchen, bakery, monitors in the dorms, library, and the grounds. Some of this was piece work, such as ironing shirts at the laundry and cutting corn for ensilage by the row. Mowing the extensive campus lawns, all with hand-powered mowers, provided steady work for those lacking more marketable skills.

There were some jobs more desirable than others, such as lab assistants, library workers, dormitory monitors, assisting the Registrar, and driving truck to the White to deliver milk and eggs daily. By good fortune I was offered a real plum: being a "bounty hunter" on the farm. It paid so much per tail for rabbits and squirrels that had become a plague. Since I had to supply my own ammo there could be no wild shooting or my thin profit margin would literally go up in smoke. It was a great work but unfortunately I soon worked myself out of a job by

being too accurate with the fire power.

Campus rumor had it that the milkers at the dairy were the best paid students. If this were true they certainly deserved it with their horrendous working hours and every-day-of-the-week schedule. The only diversion was provided by a radio (forbidden elsewhere on campus). The cows did better in milk production, so it was claimed, with a diet of sad country music. This was never confirmed by scientific testing.

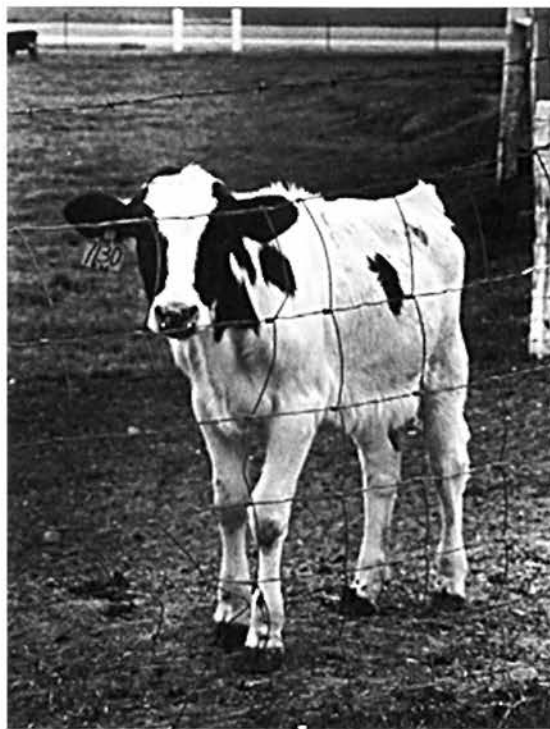
Dairy workers had a certain amount of prestige on campus which served them well when they had to dash from work to class without time for proper clean-up. Their presence in class could not be missed if they had served silage to the cows along with their other duties. The combination created an aroma that could not be banished from one's sensibilities even with psychological counseling.

I have no extensive information on the pay scales then in effect but I am certain that the minimum wage for students was 15 cents an hour because I was on that level for so long. In the summer the standard work week on the farm was 60 hours so that added up to a nice total of \$9 which would

go far toward paying for one month of tuition (\$11; \$12 college) for the next school year. Only years later did I move up to the incredible pay of 25 cents an hour when I became a physics lab assistant. Obviously FDR and the New Deal had not yet impacted the campus relative to minimum wages and hours, and child labor restrictions.

Student labor all became credit to your account at the business office; cash could only be obtained by an emotional appeal to the business manager for some desperately needed personal necessity. But the only nearby place to spend cash anyway was at Five Points with Applegate's noted grocery and variety store, a basic barber shop (which had a supply of magazines which were forbidden on campus, such as Esquire), and Walters' Bakery which concentrated on fruit pies that were sold to restaurants and stores in the area (it was an insider secret that if you met the delivery truck Friday afternoon when it returned with unsold pies these could be bought for a mere 25 cents for a whole pie).

It should be obvious that no student was ever attracted to La Sierra just to work and make his fortune.



*Cattle played an important role in the life of La Sierra for many years*



## Administration

Looking closely at the administration of the college, one must be truly impressed not only at individual quality but at the leanness of the ranks and the extensive loads carried. The first team had no back-ups or replacement players—there were no vice-presidents, no principals of the grade school or the academy, no dean of students, no executive secretaries, no special assistants to anybody, no department chairpersons, and, astounding and almost unbelievable, not even a dean of the college. In addition many administrators actually taught classes regularly. The president was listed as a history teacher although I never saw him in the classroom; but he did have an M.A. from Claremont in history as I later inspected his thesis in the library there.

Actually there were only three regular administrators listed in the Bulletin: the president (E.E. Cossentine), business manager (A.R. Smith; followed by K.F. Ambs), and registrar (delightful little Minnie Belle Scott). The listing was made more respectable by including the farm manager and his assistant, the dormitory deans, industry managers (Wood Products and Printing), and the matron (cafeteria manager, the wife of the pastor and religion teacher). Apparently this administration had not even learned how to spell the word bureaucracy. Clearly there was little money available for fringe positions with tuition set so low in a situation where income was largely tuition driven, as contemporary jargon has it.

Proliferation of committees had not yet taken root at La Sierra as just six were listed: Religious Activities, Registration and Graduation, Library, Government, Entertainment, and one subtly named simply "Dress." There were no students on these committees although the wife of the assistant farm manager was on the Dress committee.

Obviously students carefully avoided the Government and Dress committees.

It is regrettable that official records contain little mention of staff and supervisory personnel who obviously performed essential functions. The only one I can remember is Assistant Farm Manager G.E. Stearns (and my faulty memory has certainly been helped by a mental picture of him mounted on that beautiful Arabian stallion, like General Robert E. Lee on a similar Arabian, his favorite mount, Traveller).

Probably few students ever came to La Sierra solely because of an administrator, although their services were essential to the effective operation of the campus. They existed solely to serve and support the one essential campus activity, teaching.

## Health Care

First Aid was provided by the Dean of Women in Gladwyn Hall. More serious cases were taken to the County Hospital in Arlington. Primitive dental service was available at times in a small office on the top floor of San Fernando Hall. There was no anesthesia, even "local," and no pretty dental assistants to ease the trauma.

Clearly no one came to La Sierra just for its medical services.

## Faculty

Turning to the faculty, the people who actually did the critically important work for which La Sierra had been established, one is again impressed with how much was accomplished by so few. The Faculty Roster for the 1936 school year totaled just 19, including three grade school teachers (one with no degree), two dormitory deans (Velma M. Wallace was also designated as Instructor of Art but there is no indication that Walter Crandall did any teaching), the non-teaching President, some who were primarily academy teachers, and the farm manager who had a degree but taught only minimally.

All except one of the 19 had at least a B.A. degree and 8 had M.A.s. There were no doctorates. Those with an M.A. or M.S.

were designated "professor" of a specific academic discipline or as simply "President." The rest were "instructors" in a discipline or were grade school teachers or dormitory deans (the only "deans" then on campus). The sole exception to this neat scheme was Sidney A. Smith, B.S., Professor Agriculture and Farm Manager, whose impressive experience in agriculture apparently secured for him this elevation in academic status. It was well deserved.

Their undergraduate training had been at a variety of Adventist colleges, including two that later experi-

enced the trauma of a name change: Emmanuel Missionary College, and Washington Missionary College. Two others can still be identified: Union College and Pacific Union College. PUC understandably claimed the largest number of alumni on this La Sierra faculty, a total of seven.

Graduate training had been obtained at a variety of reputable institutions: the University of Southern California (by far the favorite even then), Redlands, Claremont, George Washington, College of the Pacific, Michigan, and Nebraska. One courageous single lady teacher had even ventured abroad to the University of Mexico.

Essentially 12 teachers did all the teaching for all academy



*Fulton Memorial Library was built in 1946 and also housed administration.*

and junior college courses. The gender distribution was balanced at 6 and 6.

Their teaching experience was extensive and covered a wide variety of educational institutions in the USA and overseas, including the Philippines, New Zealand and Australia. Four had been on the staff at Hutchinson Theological Seminary in Minnesota, an obviously important institution that has disappeared.

I was struck by the diversity indicated by some of the college level courses listed:

"Agriculture and Missions," "Farm Management," "Penmanship," "Spelling," "Principles of Grammar," "Gospel Salesmanship," "Library Science," "Rapid Calculation," and "Radio" (for getting an amateur license; it made an Adventist "ham" out of me, W6QFG).

Looking carefully at the actual teaching schedule I was even more impressed by the commitment of these teachers.

Most of them were off and running at 7:30 in the morning in order to get in five periods by noon (afternoons were largely reserved for work activities). Loud bells rang in all buildings to indicate period breaks. Professor Cushman kept this system functioning properly and the master control clock was set by radio signal from Bethesda, Maryland.

Looking at specific teacher loads will make their dedication to duty more specific.

J.P. Fentzling had two, two semester English Composition sections, a two semester sequence in Public Speaking, Survey of English Literature, and Journalism. And just to ensure that he didn't find bothersome time on his hands he had one semester of Introductory English, vulgarly known as "Bonehead English."

I gave up in utter disbelief trying to figure out the teaching load of Miss Caroline Hopkins, the Instructor of Accountancy and Commerce. For 1936 she was scheduled to teach Accounting I, II, III, and IV; apparently continuous sessions of Typewriting II; Rapid Calculation twice; Economic Geography; Business Law; Shorthand I and II; and Shorthand Dictation and Office Training. As a reward for this incredible load she was allowed to teach a class titled "Gospel Salesmanship." Despite all of this she consistently kept her vow to invite every new student to her house for a home-cooked meal soon after their arrival on campus. I know from personal experience that she faithfully kept this vow; and it was no snack you received but a

full-course meal with superb deserts.

For Keld J. Reynolds there were two semester courses in Library Science and European History Survey plus Current History, Latin America, American Constitution, Comparative Government, and Orientation for single semesters. In addition he functioned as de facto dean of the college and academy principal. The observant knew that he actually quietly oversaw practically everything on campus. It was also rumored that he was secretly working on a Ph.D. at USC in History.

For secondary and junior college teaching this faculty was well trained and remarkably broadly experienced. They were hard working and related well to students. They were a resident faculty with many of them campus-bound for lack of a car. And there was no public transportation or school bus to carry them away from their daily work. I cannot recall any "moon lighting"; perhaps the term had not even been invented then along with "commuting faculty" who would come to campus two or three days a week.



*Faculty in 1929*

If I had to select out of this group some truly outstanding teachers from my personal experience they would be J.P. Fentzling in English (how could he keep his sense of humor with the awful load of dismal papers he had to grade?); Lester H. Cushman in Math, Physics, and Biology (a marvelous Renaissance man who could make anything interesting; he also played first trumpet in the band and orchestra); Keld J. Reynolds in History and Government (I still have

my well-marked-up text from his demanding American Constitution course); and Sidney A. Smith in Agriculture (he almost made a farmer out of me).

### **Single Dedication**

Of those 16 secondary and junior college teachers on the 1936 faculty, 6 were remarkably talented and dedicated single women whose services were obtained at bargain rates by La Sierra, because of a severely discriminatory wage rate for unmarried women. Just to list their names is to remind anyone who knew them of the inestimable contributions which they individually and collectively made to the 75 year history of La Sierra: Mabel Jensen, Agnes L. Sorenson, Caroline S. Hopkins, Anna D. Paulson, Velma M. Wallace, Fedalma Ragon. Their sac-



rificial examples have been followed by countless other women since then. I would suggest some sort of fitting, although very belated, recognition of their exemplary contributions to our history.

This should not suggest that the many wives who were employed at La Sierra were generously treated in comparison with their husbands. This was the age of the euphemistically titled "living wage" and "head of household" concepts invented by the fevered mind of some male best now forgotten.



*Seventy-five years later*

## Conclusion

Now we should return to our Big Question: *Why has La Sierra survived for seventy-five years?* To me this 1936 faculty represents the fundamental reason why students have been coming to La Sierra for 75 years to obtain a superior education. If this heritage of outstanding teaching is kept alive we need never fear that these acres will ever revert to a watermelon patch.

# A Tribute to Paul J. Landa

**Rennie B. Schoepflin**

**P**aul Landa, historian of Christianity and long-time professor at La Sierra University, passed to his rest on 10 November 1997 after a three-and-a-half year battle with cancer. He was 56.

Born in North Africa to French Huguenot missionary parents, Paul spent his childhood and teen years in the Middle East, France, and Tahiti. He graduated from Avondale College and Andrews University, and he subsequently received a doctorate in church history from Vanderbilt University. Paul specialized in Patristic and Reformation Studies and produced definitive work on William Farel, but his insatiable curiosity and wide-ranging expertise produced masterful lectures that ranged across the whole of Western religious, intellectual, and cultural history and which brought the past alive with great depth and sparkling clarity. Fully at home in the libraries and archives of Europe, Paul studied and conducted research in London, Paris, Geneva, and Zurich, and he presented scholarly papers at conferences in Geneva, Neuchatel, Erfurt, and Montpellier, as well as in the United States and Australia. He maintained active membership in half a dozen professional organizations related to his scholarly interests and served for six years on the executive council of the American Society of Church History. His literary contributions to the Seventh-day Adventist denomination included his editorial contributions to *Adventist Heritage* and *These Times* and his regular column in *Signs of the Times*.

A history and religion faculty member at La Sierra University since 1971, Paul had turned in recent years to secondary interests in administrative theory, adult education (he founded the university's Center for Lifelong

Learning), and strategic planning. His planning seminars for local parishes and pastors made a lasting impact on church life among Adventists and beyond.

I knew Paul Landa for twenty-two years—as teacher, mentor, colleague, and friend. In all my years as a student, I have not known a teacher better prepared for the classroom or better able to effectively engage his students—be it a lecture, a seminar discussion, or a tutorial. In the best Rankian tradition, Paul immersed himself in the



Paul J. Landa

records of the past—manuscripts, art, literature, or music. He used whatever could help him better capture the thoughts and passions of an age. I never wanted to come to class unprepared—not only because he was sure to find me out, but because I didn't want to disappoint him. He had that ability

to inspire excellence in his students, in great part because he demanded so much of himself. I've never forgotten the night we pored over Luther's *Lectures on Romans*—Paul, the master, every bit as much the student of the text as I, the apprentice.

The tenacity of Paul's commitment to the Seventh-day Adventist church never ceased to amaze me. To be truthful, it mystified and often frustrated me, for we agreed that our church often seems to prefer religious superficiality to theological rigor and intellectual integrity. But that never seemed to keep Paul from ceaselessly working to bring academic excellence and integrity to La Sierra University, and to see that effort as essential to the task of transforming his church. And in that effort he seemed indefatigable, using almost anything at his disposal, be it a calculating and determined *realpolitik*, a patient but insistent counsel to those in positions of leadership, the energetic organization of a series of lectures on Adventism's future in the light of its past, or the steady example of classroom excellence, administrative leadership, and committee service. I can still hear Paul say to me, as he did so many times over the years in La Sierra Hall: "Hey Rennie, you got a minute? I want to bounce an idea off you," or, "Rennie, How's it going? There's something I wanted to pick your brain about." His vision for the future knew no bounds. Thirty minutes or an hour later, we would go our separate ways, having listened, probed, prodded, and argued. We loved to argue—"go at it" as he used to say. It invigorated and exhilarated him. For both of us it represented the essence of an academic's life. I am a better person and La Sierra University is a better place because of Paul.

Years ago, my wife, Le Ann, and I attended our first Los Angeles Philharmonic concert at the invitation of Paul and his wife, Iris. It was a wonderful evening of conversation, Mahler, Mehta, and after-concert



dessert. I still think that Paul's love of both Mehta and Mahler reveal much about the man. Zubin Mehta, the charismatically electric conductor who helped transform the LA Phil into a world-class orchestra; and Gustav Mahler, the late-nineteenth-century composer, whose music has been described as "the last farewell of modern man to the beautiful, fading dream of Romanticism." Like Mehta, Paul possessed great talent, boundless energy, and unswerving purpose. Like Mahler, Paul lived a life of "exultation and hope, of fatalism and optimism, of anguished questioning and universal affirmation, of emotional intensity and intellectual detachment—worldly-wise and world-weary." As the Chorus of Angels sings in Mahler's 8th Symphony:

Now is the noble element  
of the spirit world saved from the Evil One:

Whoever struggles and aspires  
him can we rescue;  
and if he has shared  
in the Love that comes from above,  
the Heavenly Host will greet him  
with heartfelt welcome.

—Goethe's *Faust*,  
sung by the Chorus of Angels  
in Mahler's Symphony #8.

I knew Paul for twenty-two years; I am proud to have been his friend.

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### ***Northwest, continued from page 37***

makes Adventism on the Northwestern Frontier so believable. This is the story of real people, not plaster saints, who enjoyed both success and failure.

If there are future editions of this book I would recommend inclusion both of a detailed end paper map of the Pacific Northwest showing the location of early Seventh-day Adventist churches (instead of the tiny map tucked away among an album of photographs) and a chronology. Because it is necessary for Johnson to weave his narrative back and forth among various centers of Adventism in the Northwest, a reader would benefit from a simple chronology in the appendix to keep on track. Also, given that this book is likely to be used as a reference tool, inclusion of an index would be a nice addition. Finally, I hope that at some future point Johnson will extend his story forward from 1900 to explain how the Seventh-day Ad-

ventist Church evolved since the days of its humble beginnings in the Northwest. Here it would be nice to include some study of the region's peculiar religious sociology during the Twentieth Century, one of the things which may help account for heightened popular receptivity to Adventism in recent decades.

My suggestions aside, Adventism on the Northwestern Frontier is a fascinating narrative history. Doug Johnson is to be commended for his labor of love. Having spent virtually all of my professional life in the Pacific Northwest—a span of nearly thirty years during which I was a member of Seventh-day Adventist churches at Walla Walla College; Moscow-Pullman, Idaho; and now Clarkston, Washington—I found that *Adventism on the Northwestern Frontier* greatly enhanced my understanding of the church's past in this region. I count this a personal blessing.





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